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ABSTRACT

This report analyzes the status of black Americans in higher education from 1975-1977. The book opens with a review of basic concepts of equal educational opportunity and the Federal role in guaranteeing equal opportunity. The social and economic context for higher education is then examined with a focus on the national commitment to higher education for blacks, the sociopsychological environment of educational mobility, and family resources and the ability to pay for college. The issue of access to education is discussed in terms of financial aid and graduate and professional school access. Data on the distribution of students by institution and program, along with the distribution of students in professional and graduate schools, follow. Student persistence is analyzed with tables showing the number of bachelor's degree conferred, by race, ethnicity, and major field. Attrition rates are also given and discussed. Longitudinal enrollment and student distribution in traditionally black institutions are shown, and the relationship of Federal funds for black and non-black institutions is examined. The report concludes with a summary of all these issues and their meaning for the 1980s. (APM)

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ISEP THIRD
STATUS REPORT

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Equal Educational Opportunity

The Status of Black Americans In Higher Education, 1975-1977

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INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY
OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY

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Equal Educational Opportunity

The Status of Black Americans In Higher Education, 1975-1977

INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY
OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY

HOWARD UNIVERSITY

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Foreword

Recognizing that social and political problems do not get careful and adequate attention unless they are clearly articulated and documented, Dr. James A. Perkins, on December 3, 1968, then President of Cornell University, in a speech before the United Negro College Fund stated:

> The time has come to raise the question as to whether or not a *National Commission on Higher Education for the Negro* is not a long overdue necessity. It seems to me that the problem of higher education for the Negro is clearly a national problem and requires a careful and systematic examination of all the barriers that still exist to achieving our two ultimate objectives. The first must be to have the same percentage of Black students in higher education as there are Black students in the age group. . . . And the second objective must be that . . . the educational opportunities to the talented Black student must be of equivalent quality to those available to the white students. (Emphasis added)

This speech planted the seed of an idea which grew into the establishment of the Institute for the Study of Educational Policy (ISEP) at Howard University. Possibly, as a counterforce to the declining interest in the Civil Rights Movement, several educators and foundation officers began early in 1972, serious discussions of establishing a Commission on the Higher Education of Black Americans. The discussions did not come to fruition. However, the Ford Foundation maintained its interest in the concept and provided a series of substantial grants to Howard University to carry out part of the agenda of a commission and to establish ISEP.

ISEP began on a small-scale in March and on a full-scale in October, 1974. The Institute's mandate is to act as a national clearinghouse for data and a research center on the issues affecting equal opportunity for Blacks in higher education. Through its reports, monographs, seminars, workshops, and announcements and/or public testimony, ISEP seeks to fill a vacuum in the organized body of knowledge on minority participation in higher education.

In pursuing its first program objective, to issue an annual or biennial report on the status and situation of Blacks in higher education, ISEP hopes to make a significant contribution to the formulation and evaluation of contemporary educational policy. A further hope is to assist the public and private sectors in responding to the social and economic factors which either facilitate or impede equal educational opportunity. The following Third Status Report is issued in pursuit of this program objective.

Dr. Perkins' United Negro College Fund speech set forth two of the most important objectives for higher educational policy to pursue in relation to Blacks. This Report implicitly accepts both of those goals or objectives and goes further in its analysis of equal educational opportunity. Indeed, Dr. Perkins presciently recognized that parity between Blacks and whites should not be defined by the percentage of Black high school graduates going on to college, as some people have defined it. The two earlier reports of the Institute written by Dr. Elizabeth Abramowitz entitled *Equal Educational Opportunity for Blacks in U.S. Higher Education: An Assessment* (1976) and *Equal Educational Opportunity: More Promise Than Progress* (1978) stated that parity for access practically had been achieved if it were defined by the rate of attendance of high school graduates. However, Dr. Lorenzo Morris in *Elusive Equality: The Status of Black Americans in Higher Education* (1979) indicated that a more realistic and policywise approach to racial parity was the age-group cohort. A major point of this Third Status Report is to explore this goal or objective, which Dr. Perkins articulated in 1968.

This Report makes clear that, although tremendous progress has been made in access, it is not satisfactory if one thinks of opportunity and its implications of matching aspirations and objectives with performance and outcome. In the analysis of equal educational opportunity, a careful review is needed not only of Blacks' access to various postsecondary educational institutions, but also of their distribution within and across institutions. Dr. Morris, as well as Dr. Abramowitz in the aforementioned studies, has indicated that there is very much room for improving the distribution of Blacks within and across higher educational institutions. A principal way Blacks can reasonably approach *equal quality* in educational experiences is to have a realistic chance or opportunity to enroll in a complete range of institutions and programs which allow successful educational and career outcomes in the United States.

This Report addresses the question of how much change is needed for Blacks to really experience equal educational opportunity. It elucidates what needs public policy must address to achieve this goal. It also makes clear, building upon Dr. Faustine Jones' *The Changing Mood in America: Eroding Commitment?* (1977) and Gerald Gill's *Meanness Mania: The Changed Mood* (1980), that the limited progress of Blacks seems to have dulled the American commitment to equal educational opportunity.

The Civil Rights Movement resulted in an expanded federal involvement in higher education, which is a major source of much of the limited progress. Thus, the limited progress, which resulted from federal involvement, has not only dulled America's commitment to equal educational opportunity, but it has also resulted in a failure to take proper account of the socio-economic environment of education. Although the latter is complex, it still must be recognized that Blacks have from one-third to one-fourth the assets whites have at the same current income level for possible conversion to funds to support the education of their children. Moreover, the socio-psychological barriers to equalization may not be directly controllable by federal intervention, but certainly they can be influenced by higher educational institutions.

This Report, as did the first two, recognizes that great progress has been made in higher education for Blacks, but there is yet a considerable way to go. It notes that women's progress in the 70s has generally been better than Blacks or at least they have been able to obtain it in the traditional sectors of higher education. This Report observes that Blacks experience reinforcing and cumulating disadvantages growing out of socio-economic and socio-psychological barriers. The Basic Educational Opportunity Grant (BEOG), recently renamed Pell Grants, has gone a long way toward equalizing access, but not opportunity in the sense that it concerns aspirations, distribution and persistence.

The greatest alarm expressed by this Report is related to distribution, and particularly that of Blacks in graduate and professional schools. It notes either stagnation or decline in Blacks' movement into graduate and professional schools. More than any other, this area obviously needs to be addressed by public policy. Black advancement in this arena, as in most, correlates with the broader socio-economic advancement of all Americans. Yet, the Report quite correctly asserts that interracial inequalities are by definition suspect. As Blacks advance with the general society, if there are residual inequalities, there is a clear need for special attention or consideration in those areas. Thus, this Report lends further support for affirmative action and special minority admission programs in higher education which the Institute addressed in *The Lengthening Shadow of Slavery: A Historical Justification for Affirmative Action for Blacks in U.S. Higher Education* (1976) by Dr. John Fleming; *The Case for Affirmative Action for Blacks in U.S. Higher Education* (1978) by Dr. Fleming, Dr. David Swinton, and Mr. Gerald Gill; and *Affirmative Action for Blacks in Higher Education: A Report* (1978).

Traditionally Black institutions and their tremendous contribution to the equalization of educational opportunities for Blacks are also discussed. The Report indicates that Black colleges provide longstanding institutional models of commitment to the educational advancement of Blacks. The institutions are especially noteworthy today in the area of retention, where they disclose a bettter record for Blacks than predominantly white institutions.

This Status Report contains findings and recommendations. The Institute attempts to provide in depth studies on various aspects of higher education followed by shorter reviews of the monographs with findings and recommendations from the National Advisory Board. This Report is largely based upon Dr. Morris' comprehensive and policy intensive *Elusive Equality*. The Board is not only grateful for his work in that monograph, but also appreciates the outstanding work he put into this Report. The Board also appreciates the substantial assistance provided Dr. Morris by Mr. Floyd Hayes, III, Research Assistant, and the clerical and typing support provided by Ms. Brenda Lane, Secretary, both on the staff of ISEP. The Board acknowledges the contribution of the entire staff to this Report, particularly the editorial work of Mr. Steven Jones, Editorial Assistant, Dr. Sarah E. Moten, Assistant to the Director for Research, and Ms. Sheryl Sears, Research Assistant and Special Editor for this Report. The Board hopes that this Report, like the other works of the Institute, will make a major contribution to the ongoing dialogues and discussions regarding social and higher educational policy in the United States.

Finally, Howard University and the Institute gratefully acknowledge the substantial and continued support of the Ford Foundation, without which this Report and the previous major publications of the Institute would not have been possible.

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Preface

The Spring of 1978 was a time of waiting, of high expectations and of mixed despair and optimism as black policy analysts, administrators, faculty, students and researchers in American higher education awaited the instantly famous Supreme Court decision in the case of *The Regents of the University of California v. Allan Bakke.* Black Americans, along with other disadvantaged minorities, felt that the progress they had made in higher education and the promises yet to be fulfilled were being contested before the Court under the rubric of "affirmative action" versus "reverse discrimination." When the decision was finally announced on June 28, 1978, the nation reverberated with comments like "I am not sure what it means," or "I'll have to study the opinion;" and most impressively, "the decision has something for everyone." Eventually, two fairly distinct points of view emerged among higher education analysts concerned with black progress. One viewpoint lauded the decision on the grounds that the Court permitted continued affirmative action for blacks inasmuch as race could be taken into account in the admissions process. The other viewpoint expressed dismay that "reverse discrimination" claims had been legitimated by the Court and that narrow limits had been imposed on affirmative action. From either perspective, the prognosis for the future of blacks in higher education was uninspiring. At best, the status of blacks in higher education remained unchanged. At worst, all progress toward equality made since the 1960s would be threatened.

Nearly everyone now agrees that the future depends less on the Court's ruling in *Bakke* than on the commitment of educators and policy-makers to support equal opportunity for underrepresented minorities in higher education. Their commitment can be judged by the record of black progress in higher education and by the degree to which higher education has been reformed or restructured in order to assure continued progress. Accordingly, the optimists may have been right to the extent that very little had to change as a consequence of *Bakke*, but the pessimists may provide a more important truth if it is agreed that considerable change is needed. This report addresses the issue of how much change is needed on the national level. Because the independent actions of state, local, and private education authorities cannot be projected, there is substantial room for debate over federal policy, but regarding the needs of blacks in higher education, our conclusions are unambiguous. Progress made toward equal educational opportunity is insufficient and unstable. Since the mid-1970s, progress for blacks in higher education has virtually come to a standstill. *Bakke* is, therefore like a late prophet of despair arriving after the basis of despair has already materialized.

In the space of ten years, black college enrollment grew dramatically from 6.1 percent of all college students in 1966–67 to 9.3 percent in 1976–77. In the same time frame, however, the rate of growth began to drop sharply. By 1974, the black student proportion of all college enrollment had reached 9.2 percent.[1] In the light of earlier progress, the subsequent growth of only 0.1 percent in two years looks exceptionally inadequate.

Although the percentage change since 1966 is statistically significant, it is socially and politically much less significant than the changed context in which the two enrollment figures emerged. In the first half of the decade, black Americans were grossly underrepresented in every sector of higher education. Social and institutional barriers, built on centuries of racial discrimination were falling, but the lingering disadvantages for blacks and the exclusionary prejudices of colleges and universities were too profound to be eliminated in the space of a few years or even decades. Yet, the visible characteristics of racial inequalities in those years were rather special. Educators and policy-makers overwhelmingly expressed sensitivity to the continuing problems of historical discrimination. However shallow or real that sensitivity may have been, education policy-makers accepted responsibility for addressing many of the special educational problems blacks faced. By the latter part of the seventies, education policy-makers for the most part had absolved themselves of the broad responsibility they once accepted. They did so both by asserting that special problems no longer existed and by limiting their scope of sensitivity only to the most blatant racism (which had in fact declined).

Racial equality in higher education, everyone understands, has not yet arrived, but the current difference of opinion relating to limits of the progress that blacks have already experienced is over whether equality will arrive at all, assuming that higher education simply follows its current practices. The largest difference of opinion in 1974 was over how much had to be, or should be, done to speed up progress towards racial equality. Increasingly, since 1977, education policy-makers have been speaking and acting as if nothing at all should be done, at least nothing new. While educators in the public eye continue frequently to express regret that inequalities still exist, they are no longer as ready to accept the responsibility for rectifying those inequalities. Today's racial inequality, some now seem to think, no longer needs to be subject to the attention of public policy.

Some analysts of higher education, typically called neo-conservatives, argue that government and educational institutions can do no more to improve the educational status of black Americans. Many neo-conservative critics argue in addition that too much has already been done. They use affirmative action as their prime example of an anti-discrimination practice gone overboard. Others argue, in a more liberal fashion, that apparent racial inequalities are not really amenable to manipulation by public or institutional policy because, they maintain, continuing inequalities are not really "racial" in the traditional sense. They say that inequalities are socioeconomic and "structural" or at least independent of the fact that those most frequently confronting disadvantage in higher education are blacks. A third group takes a more quantitative orientation by simply denying that inequalities of opportunity intrinsic to race exist. While the data that this group has been able to draw to its cause are not large, the number of people who subscribe to its perspective is conspicuously large. This group is defined more by its methods of research than by any theory of equality. It can be distinguished from the second group which reduces racial inequality to socioeconomic inequality first by its tendency to avoid overall theory. Second, given its aversion to theory, this group ends its analysis with data showing that the black and white poor have, or are approaching, parity in educational attainment. Since non-quantifiable phenomena, like opportunity, rarely penetrate the analysis, this group tends to be generally satisfied that the absence of overt discrimination is evidence of racial equality.

In the context of these three types of approaches to equal opportunity, researchers at ISEP have had to move their concern from reporting on blatant discrimination and inequality in higher education to a more refined analysis of structural and socioeconomic inequalities affecting blacks in higher education. Ironically, this work has shown that the identification and quantification of racial inequality is not as elusive a task as the more casual observers have been claiming. In fact, much of ISEP's recent research indicates that evidence of a national commitment and of strong progress toward racial equality in higher education is far more difficult to document.

From 1977 through 1979, research and analysis on the status of blacks in higher education was conducted at ISEP. This work eventuated in the publication of *Elusive Equality: The Status of Black Americans in Higher Education* (1979) by Lorenzo Morris. This study examines a comprehensive range of variables impacting on the access, distribution and persistence of blacks in various types and levels of higher educational institutions. It examines the strengths and weaknesses of the federal role in equalizing higher educational opportunity. It finds that under federal influence substantial progress of blacks has been made, but that by 1977, stagnation had set in. The study concludes that the federal government, as well as others responsible for higher education, are largely unprepared to revitalize progress toward equality. *Elusive Equality* serves as the foundation of this report.

The data in *Elusive Equality* focus on the 1975 to 1977 academic years with selected data on the past years and limited data on 1978. The study also draws from the findings of two preceding ISEP annual reports on the status of blacks in higher education, *Equal Educational Opportunity for Blacks in U.S. Higher Education: An Assessment, Report No. 1* and *Equal Educational Opportunity: More Promise Than Progress, Report No. 2*. The two earlier studies provide a comprehensive look at data on the status of blacks in higher education from 1972 to 1975. The first report has had singular impact on subsequent studies conducted by the Institute staff and by many other researchers because it sets a precedent for an all-encompassing analysis of the seemingly limitless societal factors affecting blacks in higher education. While the two reports showed that blacks had made substantial progress toward equal education opportunity, they also showed that much more progress could be made and should have been made. As such, these reports have public policy implications; however, their primary value rests in their clear presentation of data showing the persistence of inequality as well as the potential for equality. *Elusive Equality,* therefore, takes up the task of putting these and other data into a policy relevant form.

In addition, concurrent studies of special institutional characteristics provide in-depth pictures of the status of blacks in higher education, including *The Dilemma of Access* by Michael Olivas on minorities in two-year and four-year colleges, L. Morris in "Greater Access and Greater Inequality," and Sylvia Johnson's study of standardized tests, *The Measurement Mystique.* On the basis of this fairly inclusive set of aggregate and survey data, *Elusive Equality* provides an informed, well-balanced picture of the condition of blacks in higher education. It does not tell us precisely what policy is needed, but it does show us what needs public policy must address and how those needs may best be satisfied.

Of course, data describing inequality does not in itself mandate a direction for public policy. Whatever the extent of equality and however comprehensively the data may describe it, public policy can only be mobilized by a collective expression of widespread support. Equal educational opportunity can only command a meaningful national commitment as long as there is a substantial recognition that it is clearly desirable but still to be realized. The Institute, therefore, recognized very early in its development that its more quantitative analyses of the educational status of blacks needed to be accompanied by analyses of social and educational values. Accordingly, several studies have sought to determine the level of our claimed national commitment of equal opportunity and to interpret the concrete consequences of national opinion for higher education policy.

In 1977, *The Changing Mood in America: Eroding Commitment* by Faustine Jones brought to the surface a spreading attitude of neo-conservatism in American politics and academics which threatened to undo the limited progress blacks had made. In fact, Jones warned:

> . . . the reaction has set in. That again, is what the changing mood is—a reaction. Strong efforts are made to restore the "rightness" of white supremacy; the assault on equality and justice is in full swing.[2]

The neo-conservative mood, she observed, had begun to permeate policy development and academic centers to the point that blacks and other minorities were increasingly isolated in their efforts to promote educational opportunity. The book realistically presaged the spread of anti-affirmative action sentiment which clearly emerged during the *Bakke* controversy.

Similarly, *The Case for Affirmative Action*, by John Fleming, Gerald Gill, and David Swinton, published a year later, set in relief the experiences, expectations and obstacles faced by blacks involved in affirmative action and college teaching. The study documents the benefits of affirmative action for black faculty as well as the resistance of institutional authorities to implementing a serious commitment to such programs. At the same time, it illustrates, through four case studies, the processes by which a few colleges have attained meaningful goals while the majority of colleges have neither shown progress nor commitment. The current data show that the eroding public sympathy for blacks, of which Jones speaks, and the continued though slow progress identified in the ISEP reports, have never been much less significant in higher education employment.

John Fleming traces the roots of institutional resistance to equal opportunity in *The Lengthening Shadow of Slavery: A Historical Justification for Affirmative Action for Blacks in Higher Education.* His analysis of the history of higher education for blacks indicates both the inevitability of white resistance to affirmative action and the necessity of federally supported initiatives to remove blatant and covert barriers to black participation in higher education. Consequently, he anticipated that the findings, later reported in *The Case*, would serve as a measure of the institutional reform and commitment necessary to give permanence to the gains blacks had recently made.

> White colleges and universities have not been in the vanguard of providing educational and employment opportunities for black students and professors. Black scholars have had to endure a pervasive, continuous pattern of discrimination. To understand the overt, and later covert, forms of discrimination and racism practiced in higher education as public policy, one must understand the history of American society and the black experience within that larger history. With the exception of the American Indians, no other group in American history has been so consistently and systematically discriminated against and denied its basic human rights. This process was unusually detrimental to blacks because race prejudice was institutionalized and sanctioned by the force of law.[3]

The Case set a precedent for ISEP publications by facilitating the development of policy evaluation and by making specific recommendations. Under the guidance of the ISEP Advisory Board, the authors described the strength and weakness of affirmative action. To these findings ISEP added policy recommendations and published *Affirmative Action for Blacks in Higher Education: A Report.* In its broadest finding the report explicates the relationship between public policy and the national mood which *The Changing Mood* had helped to identify:

> The federal government has wavered in its enforcement of equal opportunity laws and regulations, the continued neglect of which can only accelerate the process of separateness. Since 1865 nearly every effort to end discriminatory treatment has been a result of Black efforts to achieve equality of opportunity. Yet, the government has allowed other groups to dilute and derail the enforcement of equal opportunity programs of Blacks . . .
>
> Nearly twenty-five years after the *Brown* decision, American education remains vastly unequal. In spite of the plethora of civil rights legislation, executive orders and regulations, the economic plight of Blacks as a group is still desperate.[4]

While the *Affirmative Action Report* was the first set of ISEP policy recommendations to emerge from a comprehensive research volume, it was not ISEP's first published contribution to public policy. Its papers, published separately, and its journal, *The Monitor,* address a range of policy issues in higher education. Moreover, two of its published conference proceedings (E. Abramowitz and C. Smith) brought together perspectives of prominent educators from across the country to focus on the problems of measuring and promoting equal educational opportunity.

Ironically, the wisdom of these publications has recently been demonstrated by the realization of the problems they warned against. The changing mood has changed to the disadvantage of blacks and without the creation of firm governmental and institutional guards against retrenchment from equal opportunity. Accordingly, its most recent study, *The Meanness Mania* by Gerald Gill, describes in extensive detail the chilling of the academic and political environment to black demands. The Gill study outlines a renewed challenge for the Institute, the challenge to which we now turn. What are the policy options in the 1980s, now that limited progress seems to have dulled the American commitment to equal educational opportunity? Gill encapsulates the problems to be faced by applying Eric Goldman's comments on the 1940s and 50s to the American transformation from the 1960s to the 70s:

> No nation can go through such rapid changes in its domestic life without backing up an enormous amount of puzzlement, resentment, and outright opposition. Revolutions provoke counter-revolutions; drastic change, weariness of change.[5]

However limited real progress in these latter years may have been, it was real progress. Yet, the advances were made only after persistent black and liberal protest and pressure. The greater the obstacles, the louder the protests had to be. Ironically, the volume of the upheaval, rather than the actual gains of blacks in higher education, explains the current weariness and reaction. Now, the most immediate task is to determine whether and how this reaction can be turned around so that prevalent illusions of equal opportunity can be replaced by the real thing.

1

Concepts of Equal Educational Opportunity and the Federal Role

What follows the phrase "equal educational opportunity" in the policy analysis literature is either a broad conceptual generalization, a specialized interpretation of the term, and/or a list of definitions. Every systematic analysis of authoritative public action that is taken to promote equal opportunity must go beyond or around the action itself to produce a coherent and comprehensive definition of the policy. The product of such policy analysis may include an evaluation of programs' purposes, structures, and effects, but it must contain a vision of the goal of equality of opportunity which transcends anything prescribed in the program examined. There is, federal officials generally say, a national policy of equal educational opportunity, but the statement is more accurate as an expression of public purpose or intention than as a description of the federal role in higher education. We recognize and support continued federal efforts to implement this important purpose. Yet, we also recognize that a comprehensive policy of equal educational opportunity requires "substantive coherence," broad program organization, careful program evaluation and, of course, a long-range perspective and analysis.* These attributes still need to be brought into the national higher education picture in order to solidify a policy of equal education opportunity.

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* Thomas Wolanin and Lawrence Gladieux point out that a policy arena is characterized "by substantive coherence, a set of interrelated programs conducted by the government focusing on a set of needs, problems, or concerns of the nation."[1] Regarding political culture surrounding higher education policy, they say: "Out of the historical resolutions of specific issues and the basic cultural and political values of American society, there develops in each well-defined policy arena, the means that should be employed in attaining those goals, and the

Concepts of equal opportunity in legislation have slipped one into the other with no public acclamation of transformation but with such frequency that consistent, precise definition cannot encompass all the relevant programs. In the same vein, the expressed purposes and value implications of each piece of legislation and program administration never permits the simultaneous commitment to equality of opportunity and explicit redefinition of the goal. As a consequence, the analysis of equal educational opportunity, conceptually and programmatically, must be immersed in the details of program implementation and the extrapolation of program intention. The former theoretical effort should, of course, be guided by technical expertise and methodological imperatives, while the practical is a creative, value-generating enterprise, fundamentally like the policy making process, itself.

James Coleman observes in *Policy Research in the Social Sciences* that "the defining characteristics of policy research are [that] . . . the research problem originates outside the discipline and . . . [that] the research results are destined for the world of action, outside the discipline."[3] If the problem of equal opportunity was simply the elimination of social inequality, then analysis could be relatively value free. However, changing public interests in elements of social inequality, as well as ambiguity in the concept of opportunity, have meant that research must, at a minimum, select and interpret definitions of equality of opportunity. To that end, the first goal of research is to clarify what policy is intended by equal opportunity programs, and second to determine what elements of inequality are not effectively addressed by existing programs. The findings reported in this study, and the data on which they are based, are presented to clarify the range and content of equal opportunity as it is institutionalized. The recommendations presented here grow out of the findings but they also specify the limits of current practices. The recommendations, therefore, are designed to bring to the surface those persistent

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nature of political relationships through which policy-making should be achieved. The political culture of a policy arena sets the limits and boundaries of legitimate federal ends and means. This political culture, the ideals and operating norms of the policy arena, is the baseline from which and within which new policy evolves."[2]

elements of inequality which public policy has mistakenly failed to address.

A study commissioned by the National Institute of Education, drawing on Coleman's review of major concepts of equal educational opportunity, singles out four prevailing concepts which have sequentially grown to prominence in American history of public education.

> In the first stage of the development of the concept, acceptance was given to the notion that there must be a common curriculum for all children. In the second stage, this assumption was challenged by the recognition that since all children were not college-bound it might be an infringement of equality of educational opportunity to subject some to college entrance preparation instead of vocational education. Hence, equality of educational opportunity meant providing a varied curriculum in order to accommodate different types of students. The third stage of the concept was represented by the conflict resulting from the challenge to the idea that children of diverse background [sic] must be allowed to attend the same school. The fourth stage is marked by the assumption that equal education opportunity depends upon the results that are produced in school.[4]

While most policy analysts of equal opportunity would agree that the prevailing concepts have undergone frequent transformation, few would argue that any one definition characterizes this or any stage in American political history. Some analysts, like Bowles and Gintis, classify the development of education policy in discrete stages, but the stages are defined by their expedient relationship to the larger political economy.[5] For those who focus on the independent articulation of public values in education, equal opportunity policy has always required a multifaceted definition.[6]

The reference to stages in the conceptual development of equal opportunity policy is nevertheless important to make because the attainment of equal opportunity, however defined, may well require a kind of conceptual progress. As discussed in Chapter Two, one of the major impediments to greater educational opportunity for black Americans has been a lack of national consensus on the essential components of equal opportunity. What should already be clear about education policy is that "the results" of schooling, the last stage of conceptual progress identified in the N.I.E. study, have never characterized higher education policy. At the same time, the successes and failures of the 1970s, particularly higher education desegregation practices, make a direct policy concern with the results of schooling seem inevitable. In the 1980s equal opportunity, however defined, will have to consider the results of education for black and white students. Yet, Americans have traditionally steered away from an emphasis on results in this area in spite of their concurrent demands for productivity and efficiency in other areas of society. This apparent disjuncture of values results from the poorly understood, almost mysterious mechanisms of individual achievement and education mobility. Opportunity, as traditionally understood, is supposed to permit substantial equality of results. Equal educational opportunity in the 1950s was primarily limited to the goal of equal access. Equal access basically meant an open-door desegregation policy at all institutions. Inequalities in family wealth and in educational background, as well as in the apportionment of public funds distributed on a nonracial basis, were largely overlooked.* In the late 1960s and '70s the unequal distribution of public funds and the unfair impact of private wealth were increasingly criticized in education policy circles. Education policy in the 1970s, for the most part, centered on the provision of equal access through government funding. Although the national potential for achieving the goal of equal access has not been exhausted, unforeseen impediments have emerged more clearly in the intervening years. In particular, the educational and social significance of access itself has been re-evaluated in terms of the differentiation of higher education institutions and fields of study. As a consequence, the egalitarian significance of access for all students has been shifting according to the variable educational potentials and results that such access implies. The equalization of access for black and white students has, therefore, come to depend on equality of distribution as well as persistence that variable access routes imply. In the long run, equality of opportunity, as defined by student distribution and persistence, may still be separate from equality of results but the separation can only be clearly made by assuring that inequalities of results are traceable to educationally "irrelevant," social factors.

Unfortunately, the policy-relevant factors in social inequality of educational achievement are hard to identify. While economic inequality, legacies of historical discrimination, and current racial discrimination are targets for direct policy redress, we have not been able to confine the ways in which these inequalities impact on opportunity. Public higher education programs have focused, therefore, only on the known sources of racial inequality.

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*Ernest Van den Haag expresses the established point of view of the 1960s. He argues: "What should be equalized is access to education, not education. The amount of resources invested in anyone may differ; but it should be determined by the same relevant criteria for everyone, rather than by irrelevant ones such as wealth of parents, or color . . . quality of opportunity never prevents inequality of results achieved by various persons but rather equalizes the opportunity (insofar as it depends upon society) of achieving these unequal results."[7]

Since the Supreme Court decision in *Brown*,[8] if not before, there has been a tendency to redefine the limitation of public policy action to those aspects of education attainment in which the state has a direct role, such as financial aid and admissions at public supported institutions. The primary effort has been to ensure "equal protection of laws" in these and related areas of higher education. Yet, the inclination to look exclusively at state action has proven untenable with increasing public awareness of the interrelationship of state and private action in education. The experience of the 1970s was largely governed by the attitude that no known sources of education inequality were completely separable from state action. The federal and state governments, some educators have concluded, can hardly be exonerated from the racial inequality anywhere in higher education.

On the other hand, where there is a way there is not always a will. As Faustine Jones points out in *The Changing Mood: Eroding Commitment?* (1976), increased public awareness of the extent of educational inequality has been supplanted by public disinterest and indifference. To evaluate progress in the 1970s we do not have to exhaust the limits of awareness of possibilities for greater equality; we simply have to hold public programs and practices up to known standards for equalizing opportunity. Accordingly, this report is designed to assess the extent to which federal action measures up to standards of racial equality that it has propounded for many years.

However, with every significant attempt to reassess the federal role in providing equal education opportunity, questions about federal control emerge. Historically, higher education in this country was first a private enterprise and second a function of state governments. The federal government remains a tertiary authority in higher education today, but its growing involvement has inspired some public fear of excessive federal intervention. Thus, the recent report of the Sloan Commission on Government and Higher Education opens with a warning that federal involvement can create tensions. "Over the past decade," the report observes, "the government steadily increased its output of laws and regulations affecting the campus, and moved aggressively in many places to get the compliance with them that it must have. This is what spawns tension."[9]

At the same time, the Report recognizes that federal involvement is essential for the promotion of equal opportunity. The Commission seems to agree with ISEP that equal educational opportunity requires a continuous and substantial federal involvement with higher education. The Commission, therefore, argues:

> Enforcement of laws on non-discrimination and equal opportunity creates many difficult problems for colleges and universities, where the impact is peculiarly important. Most of the academic community accepts, by now, the broad substantive aims of these laws, or, at least, the obligation to comply with them. Moreover, since our colleges and universities have an actual as well as symbolic, role as a major channel for social mobility, the need for effective application of the laws in higher education is clear and compelling. The Commission strongly reaffirms these goals, and believes that regulation continues to be needed to achieve them.[10]

The Sloan Commission also expressed concern about the effectiveness and potential excesses of federal affirmative action regulations in protecting and promoting progress for blacks under the new Department of Education. In the remainder of this Report, we express serious concern about effectiveness and equity for all blacks in higher education. However, our data incline us to conclude that the greatest problem facing the new Department is ineffectiveness in protecting and promoting progress for blacks. There is, it shall be shown, no threat to higher education institutions from federal equal opportunity regulations as great as the threat to minorities posed by the current eroding commitment. The Department of Education must be more vigorous and more conscientious than its predecessor in the area of equal opportunity.

Federal Involvement in Higher Education

The major political issues in higher education before the Courts and Congress in the second half of the seventies were nearly all concerned with the advancement of equal opportunity or reactions to it. The one major exception, the debate over the establishment of a cabinet-level Department of Education, concerned the structure and breadth of federal involvement in higher education. This debate may have distracted public concern from equal educational opportunity because it developed around the broader question of governmental reorganization, but the substantive educational issues which are most likely to color attitudes towards the new Department of Education flow from the politics surrounding the problems of blacks and other minorities in education. More than anything else, it was the Civil Rights issues of the 1960s that led to the expansion of the federal involvement in higher education.

Still, increased federal involvement has brought little increased direct federal control over traditional elements of higher education. The growth of federal regulations in higher education, from almost none in the fifties, to include massive student aid regulations, affirmative action orders in employment, and greater institutional and research assistance has, of course, made the face of the federal government a recurrent spectre in academic administration. That spectre, however, has served more as a guide and a frame of reference than as a source of control.

New controls have, of course, followed new federal support, particularly in the area of financial aid. These controls largely represent the fundamental federal obligation to ensure equity in the distribution of public resources. Colleges and universities have themselves increasingly sought public funding. Controls have, therefore, been minimal because they are not directed at areas of clearly private funding nor at areas of prior institutional autonomy. Thus, the Sloan Commission cautions higher education that "it cannot consistently call for less government and more money at the same time."[11]

Nevertheless, federal regulation can create unnecessary administrative problems particularly when the regulations overlap in substantive educational areas and yet are administered by discrete public authorities in an irregular fashion. Changing criteria of eligibility for federal grants to students and institutions provide recent examples of problems many policy analysts say are endemic to the federal role in higher education. In this vein, Wolanin and Gladieux conclude: "The basic assumptions of the political culture of the higher education policy arena are not codified in a coherent philosophy. They are only articulated haphazardly, incompletely, and irregularly, or are frequently unarticulated."[12]

When black enrollment in higher education was less than six percent of total enrollment, as it was when the Higher Education Ac of 1965 was first implemented, progress toward equal opportunity in higher education could be assured without careful policy articulation. Given the importance of public image and reputations for colleges and universities, some concurrence with egalitarian federal incentives could be assumed. The incentives came largely in the form of increased federal financial aid to students and affirmative action in employment. Since higher education leaders expressed substantial sympathy with civil rights goals, their expressions of good intentions were basically respected by federal legislators and administrators. Without a prior history of regulation in higher education, federal officials tended to treat civil rights goals as educationally extraneous obligations which only experienced academics could integrate into the higher education system. Federal support for higher education has been circumscribed by the belief that professional educators are the only qualified judges of what constitutes good higher education policy. Federal involvement has therefore concentrated on theoretically secondary issues like civil rights. Accordingly, Morris observes in *Elusive Equality:*

> The federal government has not shown an historical inclination toward centralization of educational authority beyond its involvement in selected problem areas. Nevertheless, as a developing trend in higher education, centralization has affected the advancement of equal opportunity in general and the status of blacks in particular. This is because the federal government has provided the primary source of support for blacks and of guidance for state and private institutions. With few exceptions predominately white institutions have shown little initiative in going beyond the levels of black participation set by the federal government and facilitated by federal aid.[13]

Yet, the most salient issue surrounding current debate is fiscal responsibility and the efficient use of public funds. Among issues most directly affecting black student opportunities in the 1979 debate over reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965 were federal funding for financial aid to students, particularly grants, and aid to institutions, particularly Title III. The public and congressional debates involved substantive concerns about student needs and institutional service but the focus of attention seemed to go elsewhere. Waste and inefficiency in basic grants received as much or more media attention than any other aspect of the grants system, except middle-income student problems. Accusations of incompetence and misuse of funds in Title III seems to have received more attention in the media than the overwhelming complaints of educators about the inadequacy of Title III funding.

Although the critical elements of these debates involve equality and race, as issues these elements remain below the surface; and this should be expected. The reauthorization process in higher education replicates the initial development of federal aid to colleges and universities. In 1958, as a result of Sputnik, the federal government created student loans to support the national defense and science achievement rather than educational opportunity, per se. Correspondingly, President Carter's 1981 budget provides funding increases in higher education, in real dollars, primarily for research. The traditional social purposes of higher education often distract public attention from equal opportunity goals and from the necessary legislative and administration reorientation which support these goals. The failure to focus government attention on the specific values of the essential social role of higher education, rather than on education as social technology leads to incoherent public policy. Accordingly, it can be shown that the federal involvement in higher education evolved out of an interest in social goals outside of education per se. As a consequence, an equal opportunity approach to higher education has had to overcome a prevailing view of higher education as a "means" rather than as an "end."*

Of course, the new Department of Education could develop coherence by bringing many programs under one roof, but it is far from a safe bet. First, the largest amounts of federal funds going to institutions involve research funds which are most often outside the authority of the new Department. Yet, research received the clearest dollar boost in the 1981 budget. Second and most important, equal opportunity must not only be treated as a primary social goal but also as a value essential to the conduct and growth of higher education. A careful review of the legislative history in the area of racial equality demonstrates the difficulty Congress has in addressing itself directly to the issue of equality. Instead, higher education legislation has nearly always been reduced to questions of finance and management. Perhaps, the major finding from our review of legislative and administrative approaches to equal opportunity for blacks is that policy has been ambiguous and indirect except where the allocation of federal funds is concerned. Even where funds are allocated, federal authorities have been more concerned with accounting procedures of the individual and institutional recipients than with their substantive educational practices and contributions to equal opportunity.

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* Wolanin and Gladieux conclude: "An important reason why there is not a coherent federal higher education policy is that higher education . . . has been considered as a means rather than as an end in federal policy. The result of this is that the programs within the higher education policy arena lack a unified focus, and, in addition, other federal programs affecting higher education are parceled out to those agencies with the responsibility for which higher education can be the means: veteran's readjustment, medical research, space exploration, or atomic energy development."[14]

Faustine Jones points out in *The Changing Mood* that a cost benefit model is inappropriately applied to education in order to support the view that "the attack on educational inequities has not resulted in gains large enough to be worth the monies spent . . ."[15] Meaningful education policy and equal opportunity have thus been most successfully attacked through economic criticism. Jones explains the viewpoint that results:

> Therefore, as a matter of policy it would be well not to allocate societal resources to attack academic retardation or to give increased access to higher educational institutions because the gains and the results are too modest in terms of the achievement of the young, and because educators have failed to overcome the academic achievement of minority group children and youth.[16]

For the most part, the federal courts have taken the lead in providing national guidance to state and private institutions of higher education. Still, this guidance has been limited in scope and sometimes with ambiguous consequences for education. The effect of the *Bakke* Supreme Court decision is perhaps the most recent example of such guidance.[17] Boundary conditions were placed on affirmative action, but traditional institutional practices and their restrictive effect on blacks virtually escaped Court review. The future of equal opportunity, therefore, depends on the record of past practices, but the record of the past is left open to diverse interpretations.

Conversely, the case of *Adams v. Califano* addresses the issues of desegregation in the dual public higher education systems of southern states by clearly mandating the restructuring of educational institutions. In the *Adams* case, the federal standard for the desirable racial composition of institutions is fairly narrowly defined in terms of the proportion of the state's racial population distribution.[18] However, what the federal courts did not mandate, and what the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, in its administrative responsibility did not add, is a sufficient educational component. HEW desegregation guidelines effectively define racial equality of opportunity in terms of the racial distribution, and educational opportunity is defined by the distribution of course and program offerings among the selected institutions. However, nowhere do the guidelines bring equality of opportunity and educational offerings together beyond the level of shuffling institutions and students. Aside from indications that HEW will survey institutions in the future, there are no provisions for measuring the degree of educational opportunity available to students after they are admitted. Nor are there criteria for determining whether educational opportunity in higher education will be improved for blacks after desegregation. For example, if the proportion of blacks in a state graduating from desegregated colleges does fall below the proportion who once graduated from traditionally black institutions (TBIs), educational opportunity for blacks will have declined. One may reasonably assume that HEW would do something in such a situation, but the questions of what and how go unanswered. What makes these questions particularly serious is that current data show the decline of real opportunity for blacks in terms of the proportion of degrees granted to be a likely consequence of established desegregation procedures.

The fundamental deficiency of HEW desegregation plans is also found in the *Bakke* decision. Neither of them encourages institutions of higher education to do anything that most institutions do not already claim to be doing in response to federal guidelines. The equalization of educational opportunity beyond federally imposed prerequisites thus remains a mystery to be solved by the institutions rather than by public imperative. The problem with this laissez-faire approach is, according to *Elusive Equality,* that no comprehensive public policy of equal educational opportunity emerges.

A similar lack of policy directive can be found in the tax-credit debate. Tax-credits, reduction in income tax of about two hundred and fifty dollars for families of dependent college students, was and still is widely discussed in Congress. In 1978, the idea was supplanted by President Carter's decision in the Middle Income Student Assistance Act (MISAA) to expand student eligibility for Basic Educational Opportunities Grants (BEOG) to include middle income families. The expressed intention was to correct a presumed inequity against middle income groups. The justification for MISAA and for tax-credits is that middle income students were having increasing difficulty in paying for college costs. Here again, the concern is with equal educational opportunity but this time for a newly "disadvantaged group." The source of the presumed inequity, the high-cost of education, was either inadequately identified or not tied to the presumed relief that MISAA and/or tax-credits were supposed to provide. If middle-income students faced disadvantage in paying for college before MISAA, the new funds the Act provides are too small to have a significant impact. The result is that only in a few, very marginal, cases students may go to college on MISAA funds who otherwise would not. As long as the cost of college attendance, particularly at private institutions, remains high, these funds will not affect real educational opportunity. Consequently, these new programs may serve some national purpose, but they do very little to serve equal educational opportunity.

Access to higher education in this country has grown enormously in the last decade largely as a result of the growth in federal financial aid to students. Blacks and other minorities are the most evident beneficiaries of this federal aid. For the most part, however, the wealthier half of white Americans continues to hold the predominant place in higher education. Federal aid has thus extended the traditional scope of higher education to include more low income students in higher proportions than in the 1960s. While this growth in access has moved higher education closer to equality of opportunity, federal aid has never been designed to eliminate financial inequality. Its secondary benefits and advertised egalitarian goals notwithstanding, federal aid to students is designed as a growth-strategy in which continued expansion would eventually smooth out racial and socioeconomic inequalities. The problem with this approach to student aid is that continued growth in higher education enrollment can no longer be expected. Confronting this no-growth situation will eventually require a reassessment of federal support for black and low-income student enrollment. While such a reassessment may only be latent in the tax-credit debate, the data in *Elusive Equality* show that blacks are already experiencing the additional strains in the cost of college attendance.

Historically, federal aid to higher education was designed to promote the national interest, or to reward and repay individuals for non-educational public service. As noted earlier, the national interest was expressed in the 1958 National Defense Education Act (NDEA) aimed at improving the nation's technological aerospace capacity. The GI Bill and Social Security benefits to dependents in college are rewards for service to the nation and to the economy. In all three cases, student support was the indirect object of some other national purpose. Other aid to higher education was primarily directed at research and development before 1965, with some direct aid for institutional development. It was not until the Higher Education Act of 1965, that the federal government established programs of direct aid to students for general educational purposes.

These programs are the basis of the federal efforts to equalize higher educational opportunity, and yet they are not equal opportunity programs. Except for GSL, the major components, BEOG, SEOG, and CWS*, provide grants and loans to students directly or indirectly on the basis of need. Still, the amount of the grants is tied to the cost of attendance such that the higher the cost of attendance the more the student receives. However, in no grants are total costs paid, and with BEOG there is a half-cost maximum on grants. Consequently, a student usually pays between several hundred and several thousand dollars a year through private resources or loans. Since loans, like private wealth, are unequally distributed, it is clear that educational opportunity is not equal. What is more, the legislation and administration of these programs are not structured to fully equalize opportunity but simply to mitigate the harsher inequities. As such, a federal policy of equal educational opportunity may be latent in these programs but has yet to be fully developed.

Of course, it was expected, in the early seventies, that continued progress toward equal educational opportunity would not stop short of its fulfillment. While the first and second ISEP Reports gave evidence that early optimism was not unjustified, the second Report hinted in its title, *More Promise Than Progress*, that things were not going as well as had been anticipated. Yet, even when the greatest increases in black higher education enrollment were made between 1969 and 1973, the political and social elements of reversal were emerging. Accordingly, Jones observes in *The Changing Mood*: "The changing tone of the federal government's three branches has been toward conservatism since 1969 . . . a wavering stance of the federal government is perceived by minorities and the poor as devastating to their life chances and as reneging on constitutional guarantees."[19]

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* The Higher Education Act, Title IV establishes Basic Educational Opportunity Grants (BEOG), Supplementary Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG), Guaranteed Student Loans (GSL) and College Work Study (CWS). These programs are administered through the Department of Education.

The following chapters tell a story of progress and stagnation, of federal initiative and federal inaction, of serious programs for equal opportunity and of eroding commitment. Drawing on a variety of research, the strengths and weaknesses of federal, state and institutional approaches to higher education for blacks can be comprehensively assessed. The end of the assessment is not intended to be a prognosis of disappointment for the future but rather a perspective on where higher education is going, and some projections on how it may be turned in the direction that it should be going.

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The Social and Economic Context of Higher Education

Everyone involved in higher education is constrained or guided by an innumerable set of personal, social, ideological and similar non-academic forces which determine, individually and structurally, the range of educational opportunities available to students and controllable by educators. In the formulation of federal higher education programs some sensitivity to the non-academic determinants of educational mobility has been generally evident, but the level of sensitivity has never reached the point of careful evaluation. Student aid programs, developed in the 1972 Amendments to the Higher Education Act, for example, were designed to compensate for some of the economic inequality among potential college students; however, the programs were neither built on the full measurement of economic inequality nor designed with the intention to evaluate the educational effectiveness of compensatory methods.

W.E.B. DuBois maintained that "the majority of men resent and always have resented the idea of equality with most of their fellow men."[1] Even where Americans have clearly affirmed their commitment to the principle of equality, DuBois suggests, there is always an indefinite residual domain of individual inequality that they wish to protect. Normally the identification of racial and economic inequality can be effectively distinguished from the individual or personal inequalities which Americans traditionally hold exempt from public policy. Such a distinction is always possible in higher education policy as well, but it is a much harder distinction to make in higher education than elsewhere and it is seemingly still harder for Americans to feel comfortable with the process of making the distinctions.

In recent years the debates surrounding the Supreme Court decisions in the cases of *Bakke* and *Weber* illustrate the difficulties.[2] Both cases involved basic questions of race and qualifications or credentialism, but the *Bakke* case involved higher education while *Weber* emerged from employment in industry. In *Weber* the contested affirmative action programs were upheld by the Court in part on the grounds that non-affirmative action selection criteria violated civil rights standards without redeeming justification. In *Bakke*, on the other hand, the Court rejected the affirmative action program in part because the prior selection practices were believed to have redeeming value. The redeming value in the *Bakke* case ultimately rested on the claimed validity of test measures of individual aptitude and, by translation, individual merit. In *Weber*, however, it was virtually impossible to find a standard for individual merit in the prior selection process because that process rested on a seniority system, *ipso facto*, a social phenomenon.

Whether or not testing measures social characteristics, its claims and the prevalent uses of it are centered on individual differentiation. Individual differentiation falls into that category of inequalities which American education policy is not inclined to address. The consequent problem then for higher education, as compared to other social sectors, is that all paths of upward mobility have formally established components of individual merit. Although racial inequalities are clearly reflected in the individualized standards, there remains an element of inequality coveted by the traditional American higher education. For example, the name for basic grants reportedly emerged after some legislators strongly objected to the use of the term "scholarship" instead of "grant." They feared that traditional meritocratic standards would be distorted by applying the word scholarship to need-based assistance, even though all basic grants recipients were supposed to have the qualifications for college admissions. In fact, some legislators insisted that colleges and universities should have primary control over grant distribution.[3] In these and other legislative debates a consistent and clear effort has been made to keep new public programs from interfering with all old college practices except those which directly discriminated on the basis of race or socioeconomic status.

The problem then and still the problem today is that the indirect expressions of racial and economic inequality are also pervasive and destructive of black educational mobility. Moreover, this problem was at least knowable, if not known, before the seventies. In this regard, James Coleman in his landmark 1966 report concluded, "Higher achievement . . . is largely, perhaps wholly, related to effects associated with the student's education background and aspirations."[4]

College and pre-college education attainment levels are, of course, clearly tied to family socioeconomic status. In *Inequality* Jencks et al. attribute over half the variation in educational attainment to the directly measurable effects of family income and occupational status.[5] Current financial aid programs therefore miss a substantial but imprecise impact of these economic inequalities. Moreover, the overwhelming import of most research indicates that other major background factors of racial inequality such as grades, test performance, type of schooling and type of curriculum are all partially determined by family economic differences which require more than college-cost grants are capable of seriously affecting, much less equalizing.[6]

The precise effects of various factors in social inequality in educational mobility do not have to be known to effectively design a policy which takes them into account. Recognizing that education does not occur in a social and economic vacuum, policy-makers are faced with the choice of attempting to equalize the social and economic environment or attempting to control the direct educational impact of the environment. The first alternative, attempting equalization, appears in limited ways to characterize some federal aid to students such as the Basic Educational Opportunity Grants (BEOG) program. Yet, the program obviously falls short of equalizing student financial capacity. Moreover, BEOG would not fit a strict model of equalization since it includes no provision for flexible and comprehensive measurement of, or response to, identifiable inequalities among students. What BEOG does, more effectively than other programs, but in a similar manner, is to insulate the financial aspect of a student's education from a direct relationship with the economic aspect of the student's social status. In this regard, federal programs are more inclined toward controlling the direct impact of social inequality on education than toward equalizing for individuals the social and/or economic environment of education.

The critical difference between these alternatives rests in the focus of the resulting program. The control of the direct educational impact of social status involves a focus on the student's role and needs while inside the educational process. The control of environmental factors, on the other hand, involves focusing on the student's capacity to integrate into the educational process, to prepare for access, and to independently maintain an adequate performance level once admitted to an institution. The key concept in equalization, which is virtually missing from all federal student aid programs, is summarized by the term educational "process." The process consists of the almost innumerable interdependent and sequential factors which, without outside intervention, normally determine an individual's educational mobility. For example, the rating of an applicant for college admissions normally depends on many educational and socioeconomic variables in both the applicant's and the institution's backgrounds. So little is known about the interaction and cumulative effects of these variations among students that no public educational opportunity policy can take them all into account. Yet, enough is known about racial group variations to indicate that there is no existing public attempt to assess their full educational significance.

In the 1960s, it was reasonable to expect that programs like College Work-Study would ease the special burdens of low-income black students at least as much as it would help any group of students. To be reasonable, however, such an expectation would have had to take for granted that race and economic background would have no substantial effect on faculty selection practices and student job pursuit in college. Subsequent experiences now show that however reasonable, earlier expectations were not well borne out.

In this case, changing economic circumstances and increased competition among students for academic jobs have meant that black students frequently lose out. This exemplifies a common problem in which reasonable program expectations are not fulfilled because other things in the environment change. In general, equal educational opportunity programs are characterized by what may be called a "ceteris paribus" perspective. It involves an approach which assumes that all things not accounted for will effectively remain the same. Such a policy approach is always fraught with problems, but where racial inequality is concerned the approach is more likely than not to be problematic. In the period of high expectations and civil rights advocacy, which opened the 1970s, Americans did not seem to realize how much the educational progress of blacks would be encumbered and even countered by retrenchment and inertia in other sectors of society.

Public Opinion and the National Commitment to Higher Education for Blacks

If the sixties brought self-criticism, unrest, and an optimistic national rededication to egalitarian principles, the seventies brought self-centered individualism, political malaise, and profound pessimism about social reform. Yet, there are two clear points of continuity between the two decades. Higher education, as much or more than any other American structure, has experienced the vicissitudes of both extremes. Second, black Americans, at the center of other minorities, have been first the victims and then the obstacles around which public opinion has defined its change of direction.

Of course, time has brought significant change in the educational status of black Americans, but the measured change does not account for the change of mind. We can weigh the extent to which public opinion has moved independently of black progress by looking at recently published reanalyses of unchanged conditions.

Most of the current reanalysis of racial issues in education comes in the guise of analysis of other social issues. Along with dwindling economic prospects, Americans turned radically away from government spending and toward conservative measures like Proposition 13. The first victims of these measures were, of course, public schools and colleges. It is not accidental that blacks and Hispanics are most heavily concentrated in the colleges which will suffer the greatest loss of revenue.

Similarly, education, an area of particular importance to blacks, is often adversely affected by efforts to increase efficiency in federal spending, while areas of spending which benefit other groups in the society more directly, such as defense, consistently elude demands for efficiency. Thus, budget cuts and news media attacks on federal funds for "developing institutions," substantially composed of black colleges, stand out among the 1979 moves to economize.

On the less economic side of social issues, the value and viability of traditionally black institutions are increasingly denigrated in the media. Some threats to black educational institutions brought on by federal desegregation practices are race-specific, but other threats appear to be racially neutral. The nation-wide preparation for the disappearance of many colleges, as a result of declining enrollments and resources, is a case in point. While black colleges will not be the only ones to suffer, the exceptional threat that such a "bite-the-bullet" resolve poses for them is evident.

On the sociopsychological level, the popular resurgence of the IQ debate is seemingly not directed toward blacks; however, the special impact on blacks of popularizing a belief in genetic inferiority can be seen in the long history of black opposition to such beliefs. Yet, a renewed American interest in genetic inequality is exhibited by the fact that major newspapers around the country devoted as much as two columns to the prepublication discussions of Arthur Jensen's book, *Bias in Mental Testing* (1980), that reiterated his earlier belief in genetic inequality. The news media have given little, if any, space to the opposition.

At some point a belief in genetic inequality leads to an acceptance of social and educational inequality, but the immediate threat to blacks, from the embrace of the genetic inequality hypothesis, lies in political inaction. The preoccupation with genetic factors is, itself, symptomatic of a disinterest in dealing with curable inequalities. Given the overwhelming evidence that all inequality in individual educational achievement cannot be explained by differences in native intelligence, the IQ focus becomes a distraction from those achievement factors which can be equalized.

In contrast to the IQ debate, another popular argument about social inequality begins with a focus on race but points towards a denial of racial inequalities. For example, William Julius Wilson, in his 1978 publication, *The Declining Significance of Race,* argues that racial inequality is a marginal subset of class or economic inequality. Thus, Wilson implies that race makes much less of a difference in the educational and economic opportunities of Americans than history and current appearances would suggest.

This argument differs less from Jensen's position in terms of its political significance than the language and data content would indicate. Wilson's position also leads to political inaction on racial issues. Unlike Jensen, the reduction of public concern about the racial inequality in Wilson's work emerges from his conclusion that all economic inequality must be cured in order to cure its exceptional burden on blacks. The political perspectives of Jensen and Wilson nevertheless come together on a primary point. Specifically, government can do little about the black condition without revolutionizing the competitive nature of the entire social structure, fundamentally disrupting social relations among whites as well as blacks.

How this and related political perspectives impact on black higher education depends on the continuity and extent of black progress. If blacks are continuing to gain ground in relationship to whites, then the pursuit of equal opportunity may require no new public initiatives. If blacks are losing ground, however, then public complacency translates into acceptance of continued inequality. The data on the socioeconomic status of blacks, to which we turn next, indicate that complacent political perspectives are not justified by the current status of blacks.

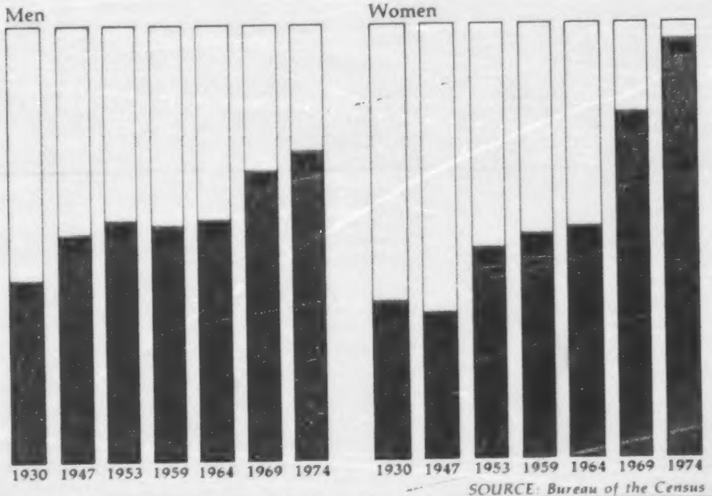
Family Resources and the Ability to Pay for College

In spite of persistent failure of traditional economic models to adequately depict American economic problems and in spite of growing criticism, the economic analyses applied to federal aid to college students are older than the most rudimentary federal efforts to promote equal opportunity. Marcus Alexis (1978) points out in a recent critique of some of these methods that they deceptively emphasize the individual as "the basic unit of analysis" and that they need to avoid the assumption that goods and opportunities constitute "continuous linear functions of income." The linear function treatment of income is particularly important in dealing with black and white differences because implicit in its use is the assumption that blacks can spend the same proportion of their incomes as whites even though their incomes are much lower. The most obvious weakness of such an assumption has been avoided by federal programs through a separation of disposable from non-disposable income, but the subsequent focus on disposable income simply reduces the problem. The problem still remains, and it feeds ideology motivated differences in economic interpretation. Thus, Alexis explains, ". . . The differences in view which lead black leaders to emphasize the unfinished job before us and white leaders to emphasize the 'improvements' which have taken place have as much to do with what is (or is not) measured as they do with the statistics used to measure the phenomenon."[7]

Since blacks have about 60 percent of the median family income of whites, there is a tendency to think that blacks can pay for 60 percent of the goods and services the average white family consumes. Accordingly, blacks may be expected to be able to pay for a college education by sacrificing some luxuries like a second car. Yet, the median white family income was $18,368 compared to a black family income in 1978 of $10,879 (1978 Census), which is less than the average cost of two new cars today. When only disposable income is measured, as with BEOG, the problem remains because nearly the same percentage of income under $25,000 is assumed to be disposable.

Public perceptions show still greater measurement flaws because they generally add a narrowly individualistic focus to a linear view of income. The resulting distortions can be illustrated by comparing a recent *New York Times* interpretation of Census data with that of several economists. In a story (June 1979) on the "progress of blacks since 1970" the *Times* presented an accurate analysis of black/white income differences.[8] Yet, by focusing on individuals and by using a large time frame the data tend to be misleading. Thus, the following graph, used in the *Times*, shows nearly continuous and recent progress:

Figure 2-1. Black Income as a Percentage of White Income



SOURCE: *New York Times*, June 19, 1980, p. A-18.

In contrast to the newspaper reports, of which the *Times* is just one example, Herbert Hill gives a different picture, also based on Census data, in a 1978 article, "White Myths of Black Economics." Using the family, rather than the individual, as the unit of analysis, he observes:

> At the beginning of the 1970s black family income for the nation was 61% of white family income, but since 1970, the trend of the 1960s has reversed. By 1976, black family income had declined to 59% where it hovers today. It should be noted that in a majority of black families, two or more persons must work to bring the same number of dollars that one wage earner produces for the white family. According to a Bureau of the Census study, "the income of the average Negro family with three wage earners is not significantly different from the family income of the average white family with one earner."[9]

Marcus Alexis, using the family as the primary unit of analysis, develops a description of economic change similar to Hill's and different from the *Times* (see figure 2-2). Alexis, however, also provides a longitudinal view of twenty-five years. This period is long enough to illustrate important economic trends and short enough to minimize the extraordinary political transformation which, if hidden in income data, would distort economic analysis and projection.

Since the family, rather than the individual, is the most important unit of measurement in assessing the private resources available to pay for a college education, the 3 to 5 ratio of black/white income is most useful for our purpose. Still, income data are not sufficient determinants of capacity. First, assets or accumulated wealth are important determinants of a family's capacity to provide for a student's education. Black families, it is estimated, have only a third to a fourth of the assets of white families at the same current income levels.

Second, and related to assets, is the degree of economic security and level of expectations of a family or an individual. In this regard, the job insecurity, which is a greater burden for blacks than whites, can serve as an impediment to investing in college by black families even where their income would seem to permit it. Thus, recent analyses of racial differences in unemployment rates and projections of future inequalities indicate difficulties for blacks that are often overlooked. Comparing 1978 data and projections for 1985, Andrew Brimmer's data illustrate the problem of employment security.

> In 1978, the overall unemployment rate was 6.0 percent; it was 5.2 percent for whites and 11.9 percent for blacks. The black/white ratio was 2.29. In 1985, the overall jobless rate may be 6.2 percent; it may be 5.5 percent for whites and 11.5 percent for blacks. The black/white ratio may be 2.90.[10]

If the prevailing methods of economic analysis are correct in assuming that Americans govern their financial decisions by a rational

Figure 2-2. Median Income of Black and White Families: 1950–74 (in current dollars)

Year	Race of head			Ratio: Black and other races to white	Ratio: Black to white
	Black and other races	Black	White		
1950	$1,869	—	$3,445	0.54	—
1951	2,032	—	3,859	0.53	—
1952	2,338	—	4,114	0.57	—
1953	2,461	—	4,392	0.56	—
1954	2,410	—	4,339	0.56	—
1955	2,549	—	4,605	0.55	—
1956	2,628	—	4,993	0.53	—
1957	2,764	—	5,166	0.54	—
1958	2,711	—	5,300	0.51	—
1959	3,161	$3,047	5,893	0.54	0.52
1960	3,233	—	5,835	0.55	—
1961	3,191	—	5,981	0.53	—
1962	3,330	—	6,237	0.53	—
1963	3,465	—	6,548	0.53	—
1964	3,839	3,724	6,858	0.56	0.54
1965	3,994	3,886	7,251	0.55	0.54
1966	4,674	4,507	7,792	0.60	0.58
1967	5,094	4,875	8,234	0.62	0.59
1968	5,590	5,360	8,937	0.63	0.60
1969	6,191	5,999	9,794	0.63	0.61
1970	6,516	6,279	10,236	0.64	0.61
1971	6,714	6,440	10,672	0.63	0.60
1972	7,105	6,864	11,549	0.62	0.59
1973	7,596	7,269	12,595	0.60	0.58
1974					
United States	8,265	7,803	13,356	0.62	0.58
South	6,803	6,730	12,050	0.56	0.56
North and West	10,039	9,271	13,906	0.72	0.67
Northeast	9,399	8,788	14,164	0.66	0.62
North Central	9,901	9,846	14,017	0.71	0.70
West	11,107	8,585	13,339	0.83	0.64

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports.* Special Studies, Series P-23 No. 54, "The Social and Economic Status of the Black Population in the United States, 1974." Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1975.

cost-benefit analysis, then it is also reasonable for low income families to weigh immediate employment insecurity against the unknown and remote benefits of a college education. For the middle class, the balance in such a comparison should be more heavily tilted toward education because these families have more direct contact with and information about higher education.

However, blacks in the middle class, although they may be as oriented toward higher education as whites, may find that economic insecurity will particularly constrain the amount of their financial investment in education. The economy holds comparatively little promise for them. Accordingly, Robert Hill of the National Urban League, in *The State of Black America, 1979,* observes that inflation is reviving old economic disparities between black and white families.

> In short, when family income is adjusted to constant dollars, we find that the real purchasing power of black families declines sharply (about three percent) between 1976 and 1977, while increasing somewhat (about one percent) among white families . . . (p. 30)
>
> Unrelenting recession and inflation have also reduced the standard of living for many middle income black families. In fact, only one-fourth (24 percent) of black families had incomes above the $17,106 budget level for 1977 that the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics established as an "intermediate" standard of living for American families—which was the same proportion of middle-income black families in 1973. Among whites however, the proportion of middle-income families increased from 47 to 49 percent between 1976 and 1977—slightly below the 50 percent level among white families in 1973.[11]

What the racial differences in economic status and security will mean in the coming years is a little different from what they meant in the past. Before the seventies, private wealth was a direct determinant of college access and mobility. In the seventies, federal aid provided a bridge for many low-income students so that private wealth, while important, was not the all-important determinant of college access. However, wealth continues to determine many of the options for types of colleges and level of study for most students. As a consequence, blacks were restricted more often than whites to attending low cost institutions. In the 1980s, these and related economic restrictions in the distribution and level of college study will become more severe unless something is done.

Sociopsychological Environment of Educational Mobility

However complex the education-related economic inequalities between blacks and whites may be, the sociopsychological differences surrounding black and white participation in higher education are many times more complex. Federal aid to students has been able to reduce the basic income inequality, but no public program has been able to systematically go beyond the economic sphere of racial inequality. On one hand, desegregation may be defined as the termination of the forcible separation of the races. On the other hand, federal integration is to some extent concerned with the sociopsychological conditions of education, but that concern does not generally emerge in the evaluation of integration. Integration is primarily directed toward the attainment of racial balance leaving sociopsychological variables with only an explanatory coincidental role in the integration process. Whether in integration or not, federal concern for the non-economic environment of education cannot reach the stage of direct action because the preparatory stage of careful analysis and understanding has not yet been crossed.

Educators have nearly always been concerned with the sociopsychological factors which differentiate one individual from another in terms of educational attainment. It is unlikely that public policy will be very effective in dealing with these individual differences. On the other hand, it is a public issue when sociopsychological conditions differentiate racial and ethnic groups. When blacks experience race-related problems of any kind in higher education, the effective implementation of equal opportunity policy requires that public officials take them into account.

Accordingly, Eric Hanushek and John Kain represented many other policy analysts at a Harvard University seminar by pointing to the weakness, for policy purposes, of underestimating the interdependence of social factors in racial inequality in schooling. Criticizing the rather narrow focus of the Coleman report on the immediate school environment and segregation, they conclude:

> Distracted by the allure of basic research into the educational production process, the Office of Education failed to provide an authoritative response to the Congressional request for data on educational opportunities. The extent to which minority groups are systematically discriminated against in the provision of educational inputs is still

> unknown. This is a serious matter since the correction of input inequalities is a logical and necessary first step in insuring equality of opportunity for minorities.[12]

If the correction of input inequalities at the higher education level is essential for equal opportunity, as we believe it is, then serious attention needs to be paid to secondary school racial differences among potential college students. This entails a substantial effort both to reduce the relatively high attrition rates of black high school students and to improve the quality of their academic preparation. Colleges and universities can, no doubt, contribute important research, experimentation, and direct service to making such improvements. Holding aside for the moment the fact that most of these institutions depend on public funding, the assistance higher education provides the feeder system may be regarded as largely beyond the call of duty. Although college faculty and researchers have done a great deal in this area, their work has nearly always been done as individuals and not as a part of an institutional obligation.

However, there is a logically demonstrable institutional obligation to potential students that is too often overlooked in public policy. Institutions, whether selective or open admissions, determine, in varying degrees, the kinds of services and performance expectations they communicate to the would-be student. By way of illustration, Americans are not responsible for the amounts of natural resources, like food and energy, available for their consumption, but they are responsible for the ways in which they consume and/or waste these resources. Yet, until the energy crisis, a change in American consumer practices seemed to be beyond reasonable public policy control.

First, in this regard, institutions of higher education constitute a system for the control of student distribution to the extent that they select students based on the available pool. To the extent that they establish minimum criteria for admissions, they tailor their instruction and remediation to fit the type of student body expected. Second, where admission is "open," public higher education authorities have, by the very fact of reducing selectivity, promised the potential student that he or she is reasonably prepared to benefit from what the school has to offer. Moreover, only a central authority or public interest can make students aware of the frequent risks and sacrifices they may suffer as a result of having access only to open admissions colleges. Above all, whatever the limits of the feeder systems for black students, higher educational institutions should seek to understand and adjust their programs to them or else forego their claims of providing equal opportunity.

Racial inequalities in students' preparation are not likely to be resolved in the freshman year. Remedial programs can help to reduce the curricular disadvantages minority students may have, but, at the same time, other sociopsychological barriers to equality among students may emerge. For example, the capacity of black students to choose freely among major fields of study, relative to white students' choices, seems to suffer from the unfavorable introduction they often have to college. Similarly, faculty attitudes toward black students (see Chapter 4) show signs of being negatively influenced by the presumed inability of the college and academic department to reach black and white students equally.

TABLE 2-1. Distribution of All Male Students By Reasons For Attending This Particular College
(Percent marking "very important")

Reason	*Blacks in Predominantly Black Institutions*	*Blacks in Predominantly White Institutions*	*Whites in Predominantly White Institutions*
My relatives wanted me to come here	15.8	9.3	5.3
My teacher advised me	10.9	5.0	4.1
This college has a very good academic reputation	15.6	48.3	50.8
I was offered financial assistance	28.0	32.1	15.1
I was not accepted anywhere else	5.3	2.9	2.4
Someone who had been here before advised me to go	20.7	12.8	15.1
This college offers special educational programs	35.0	25.6	20.8
This college has low tuition	17.2	10.8	11.3
My guidance counselor advised me	11.7	9.8	5.7
I wanted to live at home	11.5	7.3	6.3
A friend suggested attending	12.6	7.7	6.8
A college representative recruited me	10.0	15.1	5.2

Source: Helen S. Astin and Patricia H. Cross, *Characteristics of Entering Black Freshmen in Predominantly Black and Predominantly Black and Predominantly White Institutions: A Normative Report,* Higher Education Research Institute, 1977.

Unfortunately, many sociopsychological barriers to equality may not be directly controllable, but they can frequently be subject to institutional influence or adjustment. In later chapters, particularly in the discussion of student persistence, some specific sociopsychological variables involved in racial inequality will be examined. For the present, our concern is to point out the range of special sociopsychological conditions involving black higher education which goes relatively unnoticed and untreated.

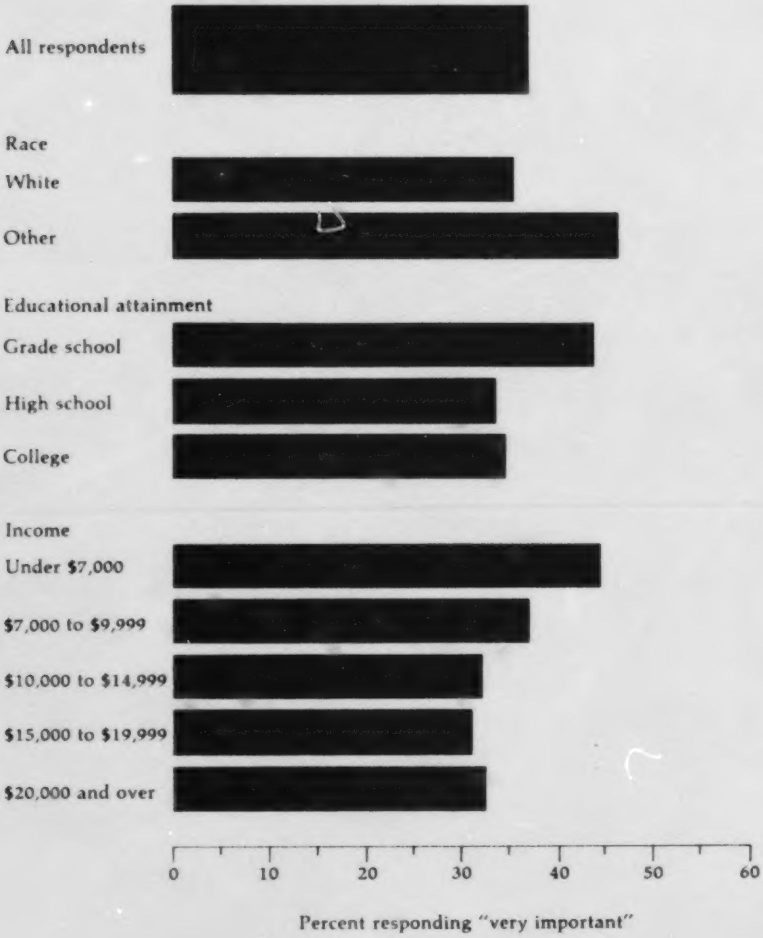
These conditions can be most inclusively illustrated by student responses to surveys which discuss outside influences on college choice. In a recent survey by the Higher Education Research Institute, Helen Astin and Patricia Cross report some significant differences in black and white students' patterns of college selection.

While there are many black/white differences illustrated in the HERI data, attention should be paid to the influences that relatives, friends, and socially significant others have on black student choice. Whether the responses reflect vague deference or direct influence, they indicate that a black student's social environment has a special educational impact.

A large component of that environment can, of course, be racially identified along economic lines. However, much of the economic variation is accompanied by additional social variations which are too often overlooked. For example, low-income status obviously impairs educational mobility. Yet, it apparently does not inhibit educational aspirations, as the following figure shows.

Conditions associated with income inequality can have independent sociopsychological impact. In particular, the occupational status of parents and close contacts in a student's environment seem to have long-range influence over college mobility.[13] The independent and special importance of occupational status and environment for blacks can be glimpsed by comparing the currently and historically different distribution of black and white professionals. The importance of this environmental factor can be better understood in the context of data on black/white student distribution across major fields of study which will be discussed in subsequent chapters. For example, we know that blacks are disproportionately concentrated in Education as a major. The above table also shows that black students attribute greater influence over their college choice to their high school teachers than do white students. The obvious underrepresentation of blacks in all

Figure 2-3. Importance of a College Education Today: Public Opinion



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. National Center for Education Statistics, *The Condition of Education, 1979.* Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1979.

TABLE 2-2. Black Persons Employed in Selected Professional Occupations for Selected Years: 1890 to 1970

Subject	*Teachers, except college*[1]	*Clergy*	*Physicians and surgeons*	*Lawyers and judges*
Total Black Employed				
1890	15,100	12,159	909	431
1910	29,432	17,495	3,077	798
1940	63,697	17,102	3,524	1,052
1960	122,163	13,955	4,706	2,180
1970	235,435	12,850	6,106	3,728
Black as a percent of total population in each occupation group				
1890	4	14	1	—
1910	5	15	2	1
1940	6	13	2	1
1960	8	7	2	1
1970	8	6	2	1
Percent Black in each occupation group residing in the south				
1890	88	84	64	70
1910	90	82	62	54
1940	85	78	53	31
1960	78	68	36	29
1970	64	57	32	33

— Rounds to zero.

[1] Includes professors in colleges and universities for 1890 and country agents for 1940.

Note: Data are not strictly comparable from census to census due to changes in definition.

Source: U.S. Department of the Census, *Current Population Reports,* Series P-23, No. 80, "The Social and Economic Status of the Black Population in the United States: An Historical View, 1970–1978." Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1979.

professions with the highest participation in teaching is, therefore, very relative to understanding black higher education patterns.

Along with high school training, family social status differences between blacks and whites are approached in higher education policy as beyond the range of institutional responsibility. Occupational choice and major-field distribution are traditionally regarded as variables for esoteric social psychology and/or reflections of individual differences in native ability. A model of institutional neutrality in the distribution of students has persisted side by side with the liberal arts claims that colleges promote personal development and cultural expansion.

As a consequence, many social background characteristics of students which influence their educational options are treated as socially acceptable. Black high school students, for example, tend to be more heavily concentrated in non-college preparatory programs than whites and yet their college aspirations and expectations are nearly as high as those of white students.[14] They also have less access to pre-college counseling and far fewer educated role models to informally familiarize them with career options. In the relative absence of formal and informal advice they are less capable of interpreting a range of cues which colleges and employers disseminate about necessary preparation.

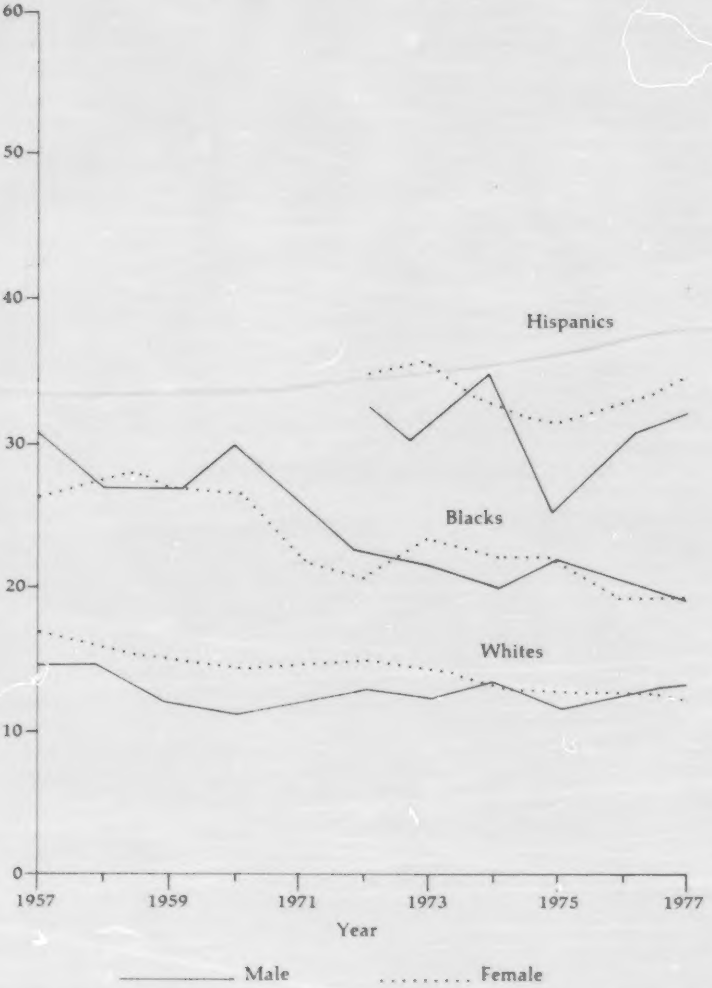
While occupational status is an integral part of social class in its fullest definition, it is often generally underestimated by those who, like William Wilson, tend to diminish the importance of current racial inequalities. As such, the characteristic patterns of black occupational status, which distinguish blacks as a group from low-income whites, have not been well understood. In this regard, Wilson's definition of class makes class inequality a particularly inaccurate substitute for racial inequality because it is so narrow. Wilson says:

> Since "class" is a slippery concept that has been defined in a variety of ways in the social literature, I should like to indicate that in this study the concept means any group of people who have more or less similar goods, services, skills to offer for income in a given economic order and who therefore receive similar financial remuneration in the marketplace. One's economic class position determines in major measure one's life chances, including the chances of external living conditions and personal life experiences.[15]

Of course, it is not occupational distribution alone which makes for a special black environment. Discrimination in all sectors including employment is waning, but it is not dead. Obviously, discrimination can discourage black students both in terms of the tenacity with which they pursue higher education and in terms of their choices of specialization. Somewhat less obviously, employment discrimination can have intense and exaggerated influence over black youth because they are exposed to very high rates of youth unemployment. According

Figure 2-4. Young Adult High School Dropouts.

Percent of 16- to 24-year-olds not enrolled in school and not high school graduates



SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, *The Condition of Education, 1979.*

to the National Urban League 1979 report, "when discouraged workers are included . . . about one-and-a-half times higher than the official count . . . Thus, the gap between the jobless rates of black and white teenagers increased from 2.5 to 2.6 over the past year."[16]

While the comprehensive environmental impact of employment discrimination cannot be tabulated, the potential impact becomes more evident in the context of other special difficulties facing black youth. In addition to considering the host of "ghetto" problems, summarized in many places including Gill's *Meanness Mania,* one can depict the discouragement in the students' peer group environment by considering limits on choice facing their age cohorts. Among college-age Americans, blacks are much more likely than whites to be surrounded by peers who are not working and are not in school. The preceding figure indicates some improvement in the black/white ratio of school enrollment, but it also shows that considerable inequality remains.

As with most socialization influences, it is difficult to quantify a direct link between environment of dropouts and an individual's educational mobility. As a consequence, one can hardly expect to develop a public policy capable of managing such influences. Nevertheless, an effective public policy in higher education will be sensitive to them. This may mean that the financial aid to students, along with aid and guidance for institutions, constitutes the only realistic options for federal support of blacks in higher education. However, sensitivity also means that the calculation and distribution of aid to black students must be adjusted to take many sociopsychological racial disadvantages into account. It means that a simple, narrow calculation comparing minimal college cost with black/white family incomes is insufficient. It further means that financial support, in the absence of other programs, should be adjusted to compensate for non-economic inequalities which translate into economic problems.

3

Issues in Access

The concept of equal access to higher education is becoming less meaningful as a description of the status of blacks in higher education than as an analytical tool. Equal access refers to the opportunity of individuals, black or white, to enroll in some college or university. Equal access for blacks is effectively measured by determining the degree of racial balance in the student population in relationship to the larger population potentially available for enrollment. Because blacks have moved close to racial parity in college access by some measures of parity, researchers must draw on other concepts to explain the persistence of racial inequality in higher education. Still, when progress toward equal access had just begun to increase, ISEP researchers recognized that all aspects of higher education were not moving toward equality at the same rate. Accordingly, Abramowitz developed three broad concepts through which racial equality in enrollment have subsequently been measured:

> Access means that black students have the opportunity to enroll in undergraduate, graduate or professional schools. Distribution refers to choice, the opportunity for black students to enter different types of institutions and fields of study. And persistence refers to the opportunity to remain in college and complete their training in a timely fashion. In order to have equal educational opportunity, a black student must not just have the opportunity to enroll in college, but a choice of institution and programs and a chance to complete the training once begun.[1]

As access has grown the problems of unequal distribution, to which we turn in the next chapter, have grown more salient. With the discussion of distribution comes questions about which colleges, what types of programs and what qualitative differences are confronted after students cross the college threshold.

Before 1975, racial differences in undergraduate enrollment were so large that problems of racial inequality could be demonstrated by almost any careful review. At the same time, the obvious expansion of black college enrollment since the late 1960s produced a statistically impressive record of black progress in gaining equal access. The first and second ISEP Reports could therefore conclude that blacks have made great strides in higher education but that they still had a considerable way to go.

Since 1975, blacks continue to have greater access but the rate of growth has declined sharply. According to the second ISEP Report, *More Promise Than Progress*, blacks were 9.2 percent of the total student population in higher education in 1974.[2] The year before, according to the first report, . . . *An Assessment*, blacks were 8.3 percent.[3] Yet, over the two year period from 1975 to 1977 the black proportion of enrollment rose to only 9.3 percent (see table 3-1). Thus, progress has slowed substantially and racial parity has still not been reached. The study of access is therefore needed to determine the extent to which past progress is maintained or lost.

Looking separately at graduate and professional school enrollment, as does Morris in *Elusive Equality*, the concept of access has the essential role today that it had several years ago for all higher education enrollment. Beyond the undergraduate years, gains in access for blacks have at best been small.

Nevertheless, public images of black progress reflect the illusions and exaggerations that *Bakke*-like expressions of reverse discrimination bring to mind. Gill's study demonstrates that white Americans believe that blacks have already reached equality of opportunity. This view of education seems to be part of a larger social phenomenon around which black and white attitudes consistently differ. Gill cites a Louis Harris opinion poll finding in making a similar point:

> There is little doubt that most blacks in 1978 still feel their status is very much at a second-class level. By the same token, whites see much of the former discrimination now so alleviated that it is well on the way to being wiped out. The two groups—black and white—may feel they are observing the same phenomenon, the status of discrimination against blacks. But in the case of blacks, they are talking about the daily consequences in their own lives of less than equal treatment,

> while whites are dealing with their own behavior and that of the society they dominate in how it does or does not give blacks a fair chance. For blacks, the pain of discrimination can be highly personal and costly. For whites, their major source of pain in this process can be a guilty conscience. In this uneven process, felt discrimination can be consuming. For whites the way to ease a potentially gnawing conscience is to see the progress, rationalizing how much worse things could have been for blacks had the past 15 years not been lived through.[4]

The measurement of equality of access in terms of racial parity still requires more sensitive judgment than is frequently exercised. Parity has been naively operationalized on the basis of the black proportion of the total American population. On this basis, parity would be reached if blacks were 11 percent of college enrollment. However, 11 percent is below parity because blacks constitute a substantially larger percentage of those in the college-age population. In the age group normally entering and seeking admission to college, those 18 to 24 years old, blacks constituted about 13 percent in 1976–77.

The age group definition seems to be the most appropriate basis on which to measure parity. Some analysts, however, prefer other parameters such as the number of recent high school graduates. This parameter would lower the point of parity for blacks to between 10 and 11 percent. While the high school graduates base is useful in primarily descriptive approaches to parity, it can be misleading when applied to education policy analysis. Since blacks have had a higher attrition rate in high school than whites, resting the goal of parity on the racially unequal graduation rates is a little like building a house on an unstable foundation. Parity may have to be pursued in a piecemeal fashion but parity in education access will always be superficial if the larger system is characterized by inequality. In this regard, available data, which Morris discusses in several studies, suggest that long-range college related aspirations and expectations affect students' high school performance. The interdependence of inequalities in higher education with other educational and societal inequalities should therefore not be underestimated.

Some indication of the general interconnectedness of higher education and other social structures emerges from the similarity of patterns of educational change among most groups traditionally underrepresented in higher education. Blacks, like Hispanics and other ethnic minorities, have made their gains in higher education at the margins, meaning the less well established, non-traditional areas of

TABLE 3-1. Full and Part-Time Enrollment in Institutions of Higher Education

Fall 1976

	Black			*Total Minority*			*White*			*Total*	
Enrollment Status	*Number*	*Percent of Black Population Enrolled*	*Percent of Total Population*	*Number*	*Percent of Minority Population Enrolled*	*Percent of Total Population*	*Number*	*Percent of White Population Enrolled*	*Percent of Total Population*	*Number*	*Percent of Total Population Enrolled*
Undergraduate											
Full-time	605,116	69.84	10.19	1,010,765	67.73	17.02	4,820,716	69.95	81,21	5,935,902	69.72
Part-time	261,199	30.25	10.13	481,577	32.37	18.68	2,070,377	30.05	80.32	2,577,408	30.27
Graduate											
Full-time	22,058	33.75	5.13	41,565	37.00	9.66	340,926	37.51	79.31	429,839	39.61
Part-time	43,287	66.24	6.60	70,587	63.00	10.77	565,933	62.30	86.36	655,292	60.39

Professional											
Full-time	10,029	89.69	4.52	20,533	90.50	9.27	198,071	90.00	89.44	221,453	90.00
Part-time	1,152	10.30	4.73	2,136	9.50	8.77	21,988	10.00	90.34	24,337	10.00
Total undergraduate, graduate, and professional											
Full-time	637,203	67.58		1,072,854	65.93		5,359,713	66.84		6,587,194	66.91
Part-time	305,638	32.42		554,300	34.06		2,658,298	33.15		3,257,037	33.02
Total	942,841	100.00	9.57	1,627,154	100.00	16.52	8,018,011	100.00	81.44	9,844,231	100.00
Total undergraduate	866,315	91.88		1,492,342	91.71		6,891,093	85.94		8,513,310	11.02
Total graduate	65,345	6.93		112,152	6.89		908,859	11.33		1,085,131	2.59
Total professional	11,181	1.18	7.12	22,669	1.39	13.30	220,059	2.74	85.03	245,790	11.15
Unclassified	91,614	8.85	9.33	164,384	9.17	16.17	1,050,317	11.58	81.84	1,235,139	
Total	1,034,455			1,791,547			9,068,328			11,079,370	

Source: Analysis of data from U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office for Civil Rights, *Opening Fall Enrollment*, 1976.

Note: Percentages may not total 100% because of rounding.

higher education. Similarly, women and older students have most readily penetrated the non-traditional sectors of higher education. Low income students generally are concentrated in the peripheral institutions and programs.

In the sixties, types of institutions, admissions policies, programs and major-fields, described in Chapter 4 of *Elusive Equality,* began to diversify, and access to these non-traditional areas was more open to minorities. By 1977, however, educational innovation seems to have moderated and so too have the gains of blacks. While some underrepresented groups, particularly women, continue to make great strides even in the most traditional sectors, progress for blacks is apparently linked to the continued expansion and diversification of the higher education options.

Perhaps the most simple element in the problem of equal access is the one about which federal policy has done the least. Virtually all access to higher education is controlled by basically private groups with private interests, including state institutions with only quasi-public responsibility. Equal access can never be assured by government unless government encourages private institutions to be more agreeable to achieving equal opportunity. The education civil rights laws and constitutional obligations give the federal government power to stop direct racial discrimination, but, unfortunately, progress for blacks and other minorities is also tied to educational practices obscured by "academic decision-making." Although government officials may want to protect academic freedom, the protection of academic freedom should not restrict their capacity to assess the extent to which administrative choices in institutions restrict or expand access to the non-traditional student.

Accordingly, the greatest barriers to higher education for high school graduates, aside from financial ones, are institutionally determined. In setting standards for admissions, the selective institution generally claims to consider the applicants' qualifications (personal and academic), the needs and norms of the institution, and societal needs. Unfortunately for blacks, the last factor gets little or no attention. The institutional need factor is too subjective to be readily measured, as is the personality aspect of individual qualifications. Consequently, the clearest evidence of the impact of admissions policies on blacks is attributable to the emphasis on individual academic achievement in selective institutions.

Since 1975, the institutional emphasis on marginal quantitative differences in individuals has grown more important. The *Bakke* case provides one example of the weight given to standardized testing. Affirmative action admissions programs which provide for greater flexibility in the use of test scores have been under heavy attack. The essential problem for protecting black access does not have as much to do with the fact that the average black scores relatively low on these tests, as with the tendency of institutions to emphasize intellectually insignificant differences in performance.[5] Accordingly, where the evidence shows that blacks with slightly lower test scores can perform as well or better than whites from similar socioeconomic backgrounds in college, blacks face special difficulty in gaining admission to selective institutions through the regular admission process.

Even "open admissions" institutions have begun generating barriers to access which impact most heavily on black applicants. Since these institutions are usually part of a state system, access is not open for selective campuses and competitive programs. While this is first a problem of distribution, it is fast becoming a problem of simple access because the open admissions institutions of the early 1970s express great difficulty in accommodating student demands. The recent escalation of tuition and fees as well as minimum grade requirements in many of these colleges is therefore more understandable.[6] For several reasons, black enrollment has not grown as much as other enrollment as a result of open admissions. What gains blacks have made are now being menaced by the steady attrition of open admission policies.

Since the vast majority of open admissions colleges are two year, one might expect strong administrative and faculty support for open admissions at two-year colleges. However, the attitudes of faculty are clearly negative according to Michael Olivas. He remarks:

> A disturbing aspect of two year faculty perceptions has been the finding that some instructors do not embrace institutional commitments to open access—the one characteristic that, perhaps more than any other distinguishes two year colleges . . . The observation was made by Medsker in 1960 that the perceptions of some two year faculty members were at variance with the stated goals of their institutions.[7]

Perhaps as long as open admissions institutions are subjugated to other selective institutions by the larger state system, the kind of access they provide will always be less than equal.

Financial Aid and the Assurance of Equal Access

The ideal pluralistic democracy only functions well, most political scientists agree, when the inevitable inequalities among people are dispersed rather than "cumulative."[8] That is to say, one or a few distinct groups in society must not be burdened with multiple disadvantages in many social and economic sectors while others enjoy most of the advantages. No system quite lives up to its ideal performance and we should expect no more of higher education. However, leaders in higher education should be at least as aware as anyone in authority of the extent to which some Americans, particularly blacks, confront cumulative, reinforcing disadvantages. The problems blacks face in paying college costs are both central to a range of problems and concurrent with theoretically separate barriers to educational mobility. Especially significant among these theoretically separate barriers is the fact that financial barriers are most severe for blacks in those institutions and at those levels where selective admissions is generally most restrictive.

In all types of institutions adequate financial aid is needed to insure equal access for black students. It is essential in low-cost public institutions because the cost of attendance on a full time basis usually amounts to about two or three thousand dollars, and the majority of black families do not have that much disposable income. In selective private institutions the total cost of attendance frequently exceeds eight thousand dollars, while the average black college student's family has a total income of ten to twelve thousand dollars. As a consequence, federal financial aid has played, and continues to play, a pivotal role in promoting basic access to college for blacks.

At the same time that the limits of federal aid in assuring equal access are becoming increasingly apparent, the variation in types and costs of institutions becomes more pronounced. Federal aid to students may not yet be sufficient to guarantee ability to pay college costs to all students in low-costs public institutions, but at open admissions colleges the cost problems seem manageable for most students. At private institutions, however, and especially at highly selective ones, the costs are rarely manageable for black students without additional aid beyond federal funds. When this financial barrier is added to the selection requirements, the potential of limiting black access to low-cost public institutions grows. Moreover, when the recent problems of inflation and rising college costs are considered, this potential looks like the most probable outcome, unless something is done.

Given the breath of impediments blacks face to college access, need-based federal aid to students can only be effective at equalizing opportunity when the concurrent problems of the disadvantaged are added to the evaluation of programs. The half-cost limits on eligibility in the basic grants programs is a prime example of the implicit inadequacy of the financial support for students where college cost significantly outstrip income. The 1978 passage of the "Middle Income Student Assistance Act" is yet a more recent example of a public failure to look at the full financial needs of the poor while overemphasizing the needs and wants of the non-poor.

The average yearly amount of awards under all types of student grant programs was less than eight hundred dollars in 1976–77. The highest average amounts, between eight and nine hundred, were in BEOG, and the average BEOG for private universities was less than nine hundred dollars. Only the federal loan programs exceeded the thousand dollar mark for average awards, and they are not need based. The average awards for all types of institutions from the Guaranteed Student Loan program (GSL) were between eleven and sixteen hundred dollars. GSL amounts more accurately reflect the differences between total institutional cost and student needs than grant amounts, because the amounts are more responsive to student demands. The larger amounts of individual GSL awards frequently indicate what middle class students consider a necessary addition to family contributions to their college costs.

Since grants to students are the basic means through which the federal government promotes equal access, the responsiveness of these grant programs should be carefully evaluated. The beginning of that evaluation involves a re-examination of the program structures to see whether changing needs can be adequately identified.

Using responsiveness as the criterion there are two types of federal student grant-in-aid programs and two types of federal student loan programs. Some programs distribute grants directly to students on the basis of need and others distribute grants to institutions and/or states for redistribution to students on a need-basis. Loan programs may be similarly divided between those going directly to students and those distributed through institutions. When the largest of these programs were established, under the Higher Education Act of 1965, and under the 1972 Amendments, the simple expansion of access for the poor constituted substantial progress. Since then access has expanded but opportunity has not yet been equalized. There is a growing need to address federal policy to the adequacy of funding and to ways in which it is distributed. The diversity of institutional costs and curricula, along with the dispersal of federal aid to middle income students holds the potential for seriously weakening the equalizing impact of federal aid.[9] The HEA Title IV programs, to which we turn next, all face dilution.

Basic Educational Opportunity Grant (BEOG)

Actual or potential college students apply for BEOG's directly to the Department of Education or indirectly through several private educational associations. BEOG's provide grants to undergraduate students enrolled at least half-time in college or postsecondary vocational/technical schools. Awards range from $200 to $1,800, depending on the contribution to college expected from a student's family and on the cost of attendance. With the passage of the Middle Income Student Assistance Act (MISAA) of 1978, the BEOG program was expanded to include 47% more students in 1979, mostly from middle-income families. Congress increased benefits by over 50% in 1979. In the fiscal year 1980, approximately 82% of the benefits will go to students from families with incomes below $15,000 with 71% of the recipients coming from these families.[10]

The importance of BEOG's to black students is indicated by the fact that about 30 percent of all recipients were black in 1976–77 while only about 10 percent of all undergraduates were black. Yet, the majority of BEOG's were awarded to white students. The past racial and income distributions, shown below, are by now protected from administrative redistribution since the passage of MISAA. In addition, administrative changes in applicant evaluation have already reduced the participation of low-income students. Thus a recent study issued by the College Entrance Examination Board reports:

> While student participation by middle-income students has burgeoned, the number of BEOG applications by low-income students has dropped dramatically, especially for dependent students from families with under $12,000 income and independent students reporting less

TABLE 3-2. Basic Educational Opportunity Grant (BEOG) Distribution, 1976–77
(In Percentages)

		Public Institutions				*Private Institutions*			
Characteristics	*Total Institutions*	*Total*	*Two-year*	*Four-year*	*University*	*Total*	*Two-year*	*Four-year*	*University*
Number of recipients	1,411,000	1,127,000	514,000	379,000	234,000	283,000	33,000	206,000	44,000
Status									
Dependent Undergraduate Family Income									
Less than $6,000	30.0	30.5	33.5	29.4	25.4	28.4	35.9	27.0	29.5
$6,000-$7,499	13.5	13.2	11.4	15.1	13.9	15.0	15.4	15.0	14.7
$7,500-11,999	19.6	18.3	14.7	20.1	23.6	24.7	25.9	24.7	24.0
$12,000-14,999	8.6	8.0	5.8	9.3	10.9	10.7	8.3	10.8	12.0
$15,000 or more	3.3	2.7	1.4	3.5	4.3	5.7	3.1	5.3	9.3
Independent Undergraduates	24.9	27.3	33.1	22.6	21.9	15.5	11.3	17.3	10.5
Graduate Students	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: F. Atelsek and I. Gomberg. *Estimated Number of Student Aid Recipients*, 1976-77, HEP Reports No. 36, American Council on Education (1977). Cited in Morris, *Elusive Equality*, p. 86.

than 6,000 income (1976 dollars). This apparent decline in low-income participation no doubt is related at least in part to efforts by the Office of Education to curb fraud and abuse in the BEOG program.[11]

Fraud and abuse should always be guarded against, but the mechanisms for guarding against them should be sensitized to implicit biases against disadvantaged minorities. In 1979 the federal crackdown on grant distribution inefficiency received considerable public attention. Student applicants were rejected in record numbers. Black students were reportedly disproportionately represented in this group. While no bias was intended, it may have nevertheless resulted. It is fairly obvious when stated but often overlooked when put into practice that middle and upper income students, by their very income levels, have an advantage in reporting on and dealing with matters of money (see table 3-2).

Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG)

The SEOG program supplements the BEOG program. In contrast to the BEOG, ED allocates funds to participating institutions, which make the awards to students. Students who are attending at least half-time are eligible to receive from $200 to $1,500 per year or up to one half the amount of the other student aid that must be provided by the institution on a matching basis, up to a maximum grant of $4,000 over four academic years.

A slightly higher proportion of non-minority students received SEOG than BEOG, 60 to 57 percent, in 1976–77 (see table 3-3). This difference may be insignificant but it may, on the other hand, be indicative of the mode of distribution. Because SEOG's are first distributed to institutions for their redistribution to students, equity for minorities depends on the variations in student distribution among institutions. To the extent that black students, as examined in Chapter 4, are concentrated in low-cost institutions, the amounts they receive will be relatively low. To the extent that these concentrations result from institutional barriers or income barriers, there is a built-in bias in the mode of distribution. An essential policy step, therefore, involves a full exploration of the distributive methods to determine whether or not significant inequity may evolve through the program (see table 3-3).

TABLE 3-3. Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG) Distribution 1976–77
(In Percentages)

		Public Institutions				Private Institutions			
Characteristics	*Total Institutions*	*Total*	*Two-year*	*Four-year*	*University*	*Total*	*Two-year*	*Four-year*	*University*
Number of recipients	432,000	274,000	89,000	108,000	77,000	159,000	20,000	112,000	26,000
Status									
Dependent Undergraduate									
Family Income									
Less than $6,000	24.4	24.8	26.8	24.9	22.2	23.8	33.8	21.6	25.6
$6,000–$7,499	11.0	10.0	10.5	9.7	9.9	12.5	19.5	11.4	12.2
$7,500–11,999	20.5	18.7	13.3	20.1	23.0	23.6	22.4	23.3	25.7
$12,000–14,999	12.0	9.8	6.2	11.4	11.6	15.9	9.8	16.7	17.0
$15,000 or more	6.6	4.4	1.7	5.2	6.3	10.3	5.2	10.7	12.1
Independent Undergraduates	25.6	32.4	41.5	28.7	26.9	13.9	9.3	16.3	7.4
Graduate Students	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: F. Atelsek and I. Gomberg. *Estimated Number of Student Aid Recipients*, 1976-77, HEP Reports No. 36, American Council on Education (1977).

College Work-Study (CWS)

The CWS program supplements the BEOG program. The Department of Education allocates funds for a specific period of time to participating institutions. The program provides jobs for students who need financial aid to earn a part of their educational expenses. To be eligible, a student must be enrolled at least half-time as a regular student at an approved post-secondary institution. Students may work up to twenty hours a week during the school year and up to forty hours a week during vacations. An undergraduate is paid hourly, while graduate students may be paid by the hour or by salary. The participating institution assigns jobs and sets the work-study award. The institution also provides matching funds of 20 percent of the total awarded.

Under CWS the proportion of minorities receiving aid is distinctly smaller than under BEOG. Similarly, the proportion of students awarded CWS aid from the highest income category $15,000 and above, is more than three times larger than under BEOG. This variation could conceivably result from the possibility that minorities fill their needs through grants and loans rather than CWS, but there is no clear evidence to that effect. The assurance of equity requires that the distribution process be carefully followed with respect to minority participation. Inasmuch as CWS students must find employment within the institution we cannot take for granted that the racial inequalities of non-college employment will not be reflected in CWS (see table 3-4) within the "ivy walls."

Guaranteed Student Loan (GSL)

The GSL program is designed to encourage banks and other commercial lending agencies (i.e., unions, savings and loans associations) to provide low-interest (7%) loans of up to $2,500 a year, up to a maximum of $7,500, for undergraduates who are enrolled at least half-time. The total for graduate or professional study is $15,000, including any loans made at the undergraduate level. These loans are insured by either the Federal Government or a State guarantee agency. In contrast to the other ED programs, eligibility for a GSL is not based on the student's family financial status. The loan must be repaid within 10 years after the student leaves school.

TABLE 3-4. College Work-Study (CWS) Distribution, 1976–77

(In Percentages)

		Public Institutions				Private Institutions			
Characteristics	*Total Institutions*	*Total*	*Two-year*	*Four-year*	*University*	*Total*	*Two-year*	*Four-year*	*University*
Number of recipients	698,000	447,000	145,000	178,000	124,000	251,000	22,000	181,000	40,000
Status									
Dependent Undergraduate									
Family Income									
Less than $6,000	19.2	21.0	26.7	21.3	14.1	16.1	27.5	15.5	13.0
$6,000–$7,499	8.9	8.8	10.7	8.9	6.5	9.0	14.7	9.1	6.2
$7,500–11,999	18.4	17.2	16.5	18.2	16.6	20.7	26.0	20.5	18.9
$12,000–14,999	16.5	15.1	9.7	15.9	20.1	19.0	19.0	19.2	18.6
$15,000 or more	11.5	6.7	3.8	7.7	8.7	20.4	8.6	21.6	21.1
Independent Undergraduates	20.5	26.1	32.6	22.9	23.3	10.1	4.3	12.0	5.7
Graduate Students	5.0	5.1	—	5.1	10.8	4.7	—	2.1	16.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: F. Atelsek and I. Gomberg. *Estimated Number of Student Aid Recipients, 1976-77*, HEP Reports No. 36, American Council on Education (1977).

Prior to the passage of the Middle Income Student Assistance Act in 1978, all eligible students could borrow through the GSL program, but only students from families with adjusted family incomes under $25,000 were eligible for the in-school interest-free subsidy. In 1978 8.5 million students, roughly 80% of all students enrolled half-time or more, were eligible for GSL. In 1981, all students enrolled half-time or more, approximately 11 million students, will be eligible for GSL loans.[12] The removal of income limits on eligibility should not mean that low income students will have difficulty in securing loans. At the present-time their continued access to loans assumes the private loans will be fairly unlimited. In the current economy that is hardly a safe assumption (see table 3-5).

Other Programs

Aside from BEOG and GSL, federal aid for students goes directly to institutions for redistribution. The National Direct Student Loan (NDSL), a large program, allows institutions to make low-interest loans, of up to $5,000 over a four year period, to undergraduates and up to $10,000 to graduate students. There are several programs for student aid in specific areas of study such as the Health Education Assistance Loan (HEAL), one of the largest programs. HEAL supports students in medical schools with amounts up to $10,000 a year. Neither NDSL nor HEAL are specifically low-income oriented.

In contrast, the recent (1978) Graduate and Professional Opportunities Program (GPOP) is designed for minorities and women. GPOP, however, has not been well funded. Moreover, limited data indicate that minorities constitute a minority of GPOP recipients. Hopefully, this is not a sign of future disappointment in the distribution on financial aid. Clearly, the assurance of equity for blacks will require careful attention.

Special Characteristics of Graduate and Professional School Access

The problems and progress of black students at the undergraduate, graduate and professional school levels are similar, but the magnitude of the problems is much greater at the advanced levels. We

TABLE 3-5. Guaranteed Student Loan (GSL) Distribution, 1976–77
(In Percentages)

		Public Institutions				*Private Institutions*			
Characteristics	*Total Institutions*	*Total*	*Two-year*	*Four-year*	*University*	*Total*	*Two-year*	*Four-year*	*University*
Number of recipients	695,000	389,000	56,000	157,000	177,000	306,000	12,000	181,000	113,000
Sex									
Women	46.3	46.3	47.9	48.9	43.7	46.4	63.1	48.4	41.0
Men	53.7	53.7	52.1	51.1	56.3	53.6	36.9	51.6	59.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Racial/Ethnic Group									
Minority	17.0	16.1	18.2	14.6	16.7	18.1	11.8	16.2	21.9
Nonminority	83.0	83.9	81.8	85.4	83.3	81.9	88.2	83.0	70.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Enrollment									
Full-time	92.4	91.7	87.3	95.5	89.8	93.3	97.2	94.5	90.8
Part-time	7.6	8.3	12.7	4.5	10.2	6.7	2.8	5.5	9.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Status									
Dependent Undergraduate									
Family Income									
Less than $6,000	8.0	6.9	12.1	5.6	6.[illegible]	9.3	14.9	6.0	13.8
$6,000–$7,499	5.5	5.1	6.9	5.0	4.7	6.0	7.0	6.4	5.2
$7,500–11,999	12.9	12.6	12.5	13.3	12.1	13.2	11.6	14.2	12.0
$12,000–14,999	16.8	18.0	16.5	19.4	17.2	15.4	26.1	17.3	11.2
$15,000 or more	23.8	22.8	14.1	24.8	23.6	25.0	31.7	27.1	20.9
Independent Undergraduates	18.4	22.5	38.0	21.4	18.9	13.1	8.8	17.6	6.9
Graduate Students	14.6	12.0	—	10.5	16.9	17.9	—	11.4	30.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: F. Atelsek and I. Gomberg. *Estimated Number of Student Aid Recipients*, 1976-77, HEP Reports No. 36, American Council on Education (1977).

have concentrated on undergraduate education because the kinds of inequities found at the advanced levels can be largely sampled in the analysis of undergraduate education. However, the degree of racial inequality at both levels can only be measured by looking at each of them separately.

Since the sixties, the progress of blacks toward racial parity with whites in higher education has been substantial at both levels although there is still some distance to go. Yet, in post-baccalaureate education progress has trailed far behind undergraduate education. Where racial parity in access is, by some standards, clearly in sight for the undergraduate student, for the post-graduate student parity in access is little more than a vision.

A cause for special concern is the experience since 1975. The data reported in *Elusive Equality* indicate that the initial opening-up of institutions to blacks for post-baccalaureate education has now been supplanted by institutional indifference and practical inaction. The promising growth in black enrollment of the early seventies has since given way to stagnation. Particularly, in medical and law schools, access for blacks shows strong signs of retrenchment. What is perhaps more disturbing is that public and institutional concern about this loss of progress has, at best, been muted. In large part, this attitude results from what Gill argues is a widespread misconception that the status of relatively upper-class blacks is secure. For example, most of the progress of blacks in higher education and in better jobs in the last decade is tied to affirmative action. Affirmative action programs have come under increasing attacks for their success in providing access for minority applications to graduate and professional schools. The *Bakke* case is just a prominent example of a declining national commitment.

Professional Employment and Post-Graduate Education

When the U.C. at Davis Medical School defended its special admissions program for minorities, in part, on the grounds that there is a special need for minority physicians, the argument indicated the interdependence of professional education and employment. The Supreme Court, in ruling on *Bakke*, did not rule out the Medical School's argument but rather demanded that evidence be presented showing how the School's special admissions programs would eventually serve that need. Thus, the issue of the link between professional education and employment is as important as ever for the critique of educational inequality.

Medicine and law are two examples of professional fields in which access to education and employment is directly tied. The licensing of institutions and the certification of practitioners are controlled indirectly by those who already enjoy the benefits of these professions. Effectively, the professional associations have government sanction to decide, within bounds, how many doctors and lawyers this society will have and the academic characteristics their colleagues will have. In turn, this means that these associations decide on the quality and quantity of medical and legal service both black and white Americans will have. It is, therefore, important that the power they exercise be complemented by an equal responsibility to assure that such services are adequately distributed to all Americans. They have an exceptional obligation to support equal educational opportunity.

Without much statistical elaboration, it should be evident that, in all areas, professional obligations to the black community are far from satisfied. A simple indication of the continuing need for black professionals to fulfill these needs comes from employment statistics. Since the case for black physicians and lawyers is the most obvious, we turn briefly to other fields.

Out of a total of 227,000 employed doctoral scientists and engineers in 1973, only 1,700 were black. Since this is the latest year in which the 1976 Ph.D. graduates were likely to have entered graduate school, these students were probably aware of the lack of black Ph.D.'s in these areas. At that time, blacks represented less than 0.05 percent of the identifiable physical scientists. Expanding the term physical scientist to include Ph.D.'s in related fields such as mathematics and engineering, the percentage scarcely changes. Perhaps, more striking, is the lack of black social scientists with Ph.D.'s; they are also less than 0.05 percent of the total.[13]

Therefore, it should not be surprising that unemployment among black Ph.D. social scientists has been very low. At a time when the continued presence of racial discrimination in employment can still be detected, reported black Ph.D. unemployment among all scientists and engineers is practically undetectable.

No one can count on a secure employment possibility based solely on an advanced education degree, except perhaps those with medical degrees. However, blacks can anticipate disproportionately

TABLE 3-6. Income and Advanced Education of U.S. Heads of Families 1976–77

	All Families			*Head Year-Round Full-Time Worker*		
25 Years & Over	*Number in Thousands*	*1977 Median Income Dollars*	*1976 Median Income Dollars*	*Number in Thousands*	*1977 Median Income Dollars*	*1976 Median Income Dollars*
College Education						
4 Years	5173	23,409	22,019	4102	25,224	23,788
5 Years or Over	4389	26,042	24,676	3342	27,745	26,155
Difference in Dollars		2533	2657		2521	2367
Percent (income differential from 4th to 5th year in college)		10.82	12.07		9.99	9.95

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P-60, No. 116, "Money Income and Poverty Status of Families and Persons in the United States: 1977" (Advance Report), U.S. GPO, Washington, D.C. 1978. Table 1, also in L. Morris, *Elusive Equality*.

greater job insecurity than whites without an advanced degree. The demand for post-graduate education by blacks is, therefore, built into the broader social system.

Income data support the same conclusion. Estimates of the actual amount of income gained from post-graduate education vary, but the evidence consistently shows substantial gains. The income disadvantage of blacks compared to whites declines markedly as the level of college education goes beyond four years (see table 3-6).

Reflecting on the employment and income picture for blacks should raise serious questions about what happens to them in graduate school and in the admissions process. Black students have for a long time substantially specialized in the social sciences. The employment and income opportunities are enormously more attractive for doctorates than baccalaureates. Yet, blacks remain a miniscule percentage of all social science Ph.D.'s. What happened along the way?

Financial Aid for Black Students in Graduate and Professional Schools

Recalling the relative family income disadvantage of black undergraduates to white undergraduates, black post-graduate students are relatively more disadvantaged. Post-graduate students tend to be wealthier than undergraduates on the average, but as the aggregate level of incomes goes up, the distance between blacks and whites gets larger. Students, especially whites, who pursue an advanced education traditionally come from families whose parents have very high levels of educational attainment.

While the average post-graduate student is a mature adult, capable of working to support himself or herself, the demands of study usually prevent financial independence. For the traditionally large group of students who can rely on family resources, this is not a problem, but for the non-traditional student in post-gradute education it can be an insuperable problem. Consequently, nearly all black students must themselves secure the bulk of the financial resources to pay for their education while in school. This means they must primarily rely on fellowships, loans or earnings, or, too frequently, all three.

The largest non-private source of graduate student funding at the Ph.D. level is the federal government through a variety of fellowships and traineeships. The largest source of funds overall for black students in 1973 is "private earnings." The largest private source of funds for blacks besides private earnings, is loans. The contributions of any one of these three to the student's educational financing makes the parental contribution look very small. However, the origin of private educational funding is always deceptive in that students over twenty-one rarely declare themselves dependent. (A student's private earnings are, in many cases where the student's family is financially sound, the savings accrued while the student depended on his parents). In fact, the major direction of change since 1973 in financing graduate education has been toward an increase in the proportion of funds coming from parents, as well as private earnings. However, it is unlikely that black parents or students will be as able as whites to meet new demands on private resources.

Loans for black students at the graduate level are not as reliable as resources at the undergraduate level. While the Guaranteed Student Loan helps students to secure low interest loans, special difficulties confront black students. First, black students have frequently exhausted the maximum GSL amount to pay for their undergraduate education. Black students accumulate almost twice as much debt as white students do for college expenses.

Second, private banking practices are not as open to filling black student loan applications as the theory of GSL would suggest. When eligibility for student participation in GSL is extended to all income groups as authorized in the 1978 legislative proposal on the Higher Education Act, the availability of loans to blacks may be seriously curtailed. Unless bankers develop a primary concern for black educational opportunity, available funds will go first to borrowers with the biggest assets.

After private earnings, direct federal aid, and loans, the fourth major source of black student financing for advanced education is assistantship income from teaching and research. Assistantship awards to students are generally distributed in a complementary manner. Eligible students are usually not permitted to receive both types simultaneously unless there are special institutional or individual reasons. Rarely are assistantships awarded on the basis of financial need. Generally, students are selected for these positions based on an individual professor's preference. There is thus an element of merit involved in selection but only in a remote sense. There is generally no open competition among students for these postions. The faculty member selects the student whose interests and experience fit his/her research or teaching needs and who also can work comfortably with the faculty member. Very often it is a matter of personality preference.

It is, therefore, striking that teaching assistantships (T.A.'s) are the largest single source of white student support at the advanced levels. Almost half of them receive a T.A. as compared to less than a third of black students. After federal aid, the third largest source of white student graduate support is research assistantships. About 31 percent of white students benefit from this source, almost twice the percentage among black students. Evidently the selection mechanism and faculty preferences work to the disadvantage of blacks.

Faculty attitudes toward black students, as discussed in *Elusive Equality*, may well explain black student underrepresentation, but it may also be explained by the lack of black faculty, less than 3 percent, in universities.[14] At any rate, black students do not seem to have an equal chance of benefiting from research and teaching assistantships because of the personalized manner in which they are awarded. This is usually more than a financial loss because assistantships serve an important educational and training function. Moreover, they set the stage for a closer rapport between faculty and student which could benefit the student both academically and professionally.

As a consequence of the limits of other financial resources, the educational futures of black post-baccalaureate students rest most heavily on federal support. Yet, the overall federal contribution to higher education is clearly dwindling. Since 1971, the proportion of federal funds for all higher education going to graduate and professional students has steadily declined from 22.9 to 16.8 percent in 1976. Estimates for 1977 show further decline to 13.8 percent. Considering both inflation and the growth in size of post-graduate education, these declines will seriously affect black students.

Graduate School: Doctoral and Master's Degrees

An impressive expression of both progress and the need for it can be drawn from the fact that between 1974 and 1977 more Ph.D.'s were awarded to blacks than ever before. From 1965 to 1976 the number of Ph.D.'s and M.A./M.S.'s awarded to women nearly quadrupled. In the same eleven years, the number of all Ph.D.'s awarded in this country more than doubled. The total number of M.A./M.S. degrees awarded almost tripled.

This growth has already reached its peak. Projections up to 1981 show that no real increase in enrollment should be expected. Policy makers and institutional administrators, Morris argues, seem to have taken such projections to heart and to have presented blacks with another problem. Specifically, blacks, as a group, are far from any optimal growth points in higher education; yet, their progress has generally been tied to the uniform progress of the larger society.

From 1972 to 1976–77, the proportion of Ph.D.'s awarded to black males increased about two percent. In terms of growth among blacks, this amounts to a substantial increase of close to 50 percent, but the absolute numbers provide a more meaningful picture. They show an increase from 427 to 636 Ph.D.'s awarded, ending with blacks at 3.4 to 3.6 percent of the male Ph.D.'s. This is certainly an achievement, but hardly a remarkable one. In the four years before 1974, Morris notes, the percentage of Ph.D.-granting institutions went up

TABLE 3-7. Native-Born U.S. Citizens Who Received the Doctorate in Fiscal Years 1973–76 by Sex and Racial/Ethnic Group–(A Survey)

	Men				*Women*			
	Year				*Year*			
Racial/Ethnic Group	*1973*	*1974*	*1975*	*1976*	*1973*	*1974*	*1975*	*1976*
White	16,018	17,916	18,030	17,744	3,757	4,562	5,446	5,717
	95.7%[1]	95.1%	94.6%	94.4%	94.4%	92.7%	92.4%	90.8%
Black	427	560	630	636	150	259	339	429
	2.6%	3.0%	3.3%	3.4%	3.8%	5.3%	5.8%	6.8%
American Indian	84	98	112	110	24	23	31	35
	.5%	.7%	.6%	.6%	.6%	.5%	.5%	.6%
Chicano[2]	78	123	147	166	16	25	29	40
	.5%	.7%	.8%	.9%	.4%	.5%	.5%	.6%
Puerto Rican[2]	29	38	48	40	7	17	14	25
	.2%	.2%	.3%	.2%	.2%	.3%	.2%	.4%
Asian	99	108	94	99	24	33	36	50
	.6%	.5%	.5%	.5%	.6%	.7%	.6%	.8%
Total Reported	16,735	18,843	19,061	18,795	3,978	4,919	5,895	6,296
	100.1%	100.1%	100.1%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Other and Unknown	5,012	1,242	827	801	1,099	263	206	191
Total	21,747	20,085	19,888	19,596	5,077	5,182	6,101	6,487

[1] Vertical percentages of total reported (excluding other and unknown).

[2] The Spanish-origin group can be subdivided into the Chicano and Puerto Rican groups when data from this source are used.

Source: Dorothy M. Gilford and Joan Snyder, *Women and Minority Ph.D.'s in the 1970's: A Data Book* (National Academy of Sciences, 1977), Table I-4, p. 26.

equally as fast as the percentage of black males awarded the Ph.D. (see table 3-7).

The proportion of black females has increased faster than that of black males—going from 3.8 percent in 1973 to 6.8 percent in 1976. This may not be surprising when one considers that initial disadvantages were much greater than those among men. Second, the proportion of women Ph.D.'s among blacks has always been higher than the corresponding proportion among whites.

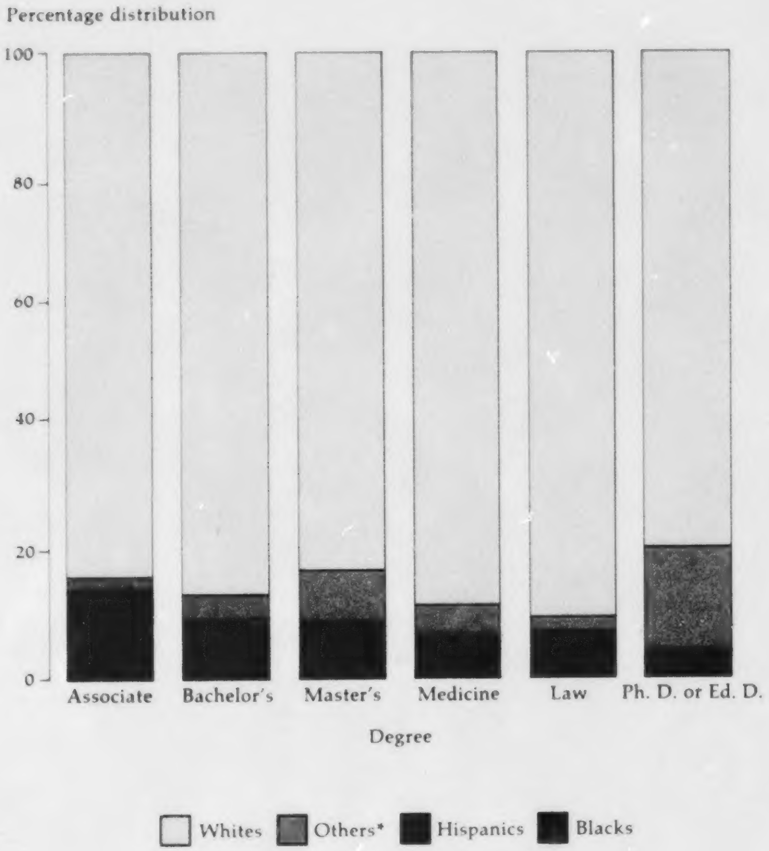
The Ph.D. degree is the one in which blacks are generally most underrepresented. It is noteworthy that in comparison to other highly esteemed professions, medicine and law, blacks are still more greatly excluded from the Ph.D. degree. Blacks received 3.6 percent of all Ph.D.'s in 1976 as compared to 4.7 percent of law degrees (J.D.'s) and 5.2 percent of medical degrees.

The black proportion of Ph.D.'s is more disappointing when the proportion of M.A. degrees awarded to blacks is considered. Blacks received 6.6 percent of M.A. degrees in 1976. As noted earlier, this is about the proportion of B.A./B.S. degrees awarded to blacks. According to *Elusive Equality*, there is no reason, given an egalitarian society, why this proportion should drop to little more than half at the Ph.D. level. Black students apparently have the willingness and incentive to continue their education in greater proportions but confront barriers to their continuation (see figure 3-1).

Access as a Continuing Issue

One of the strongest correlates of black socioeconomic advancement in American history is the broader socioeconomic advancement of all Americans. If the increase in black enrollment in higher education has been great in the past decade, the increase in enrollment of all Americans has been comparably great. The difference is, of course, that blacks, starting from a level of exceptional deprivation in the 1960's, have gained proportionately more than others during this decade of educational expansion. It is unfortunate that these proportional gains by blacks are often viewed as "unique gains" of blacks excluding all others. Yet, such misconceptions only symbolize the real social issue. The basic issue, and the issue which must be resolved in the 1980's, involves the structure of higher education and

Figure 3-1. Degrees Earned by Racial/Ethnic Group, 1975–76



* Includes American Indians/Alaskan Natives, Asians or Pacific Islanders, and nonresident aliens.

SOURCE: NCES, *The Condition of Education, 1978.* Chart 3.17, p. 141. Cited in L. Morris, *Elusive Equality*, p. 226.

its capacity to absorb equality of opportunity as one of its primary missions.

It is no small accomplishment that blacks are now approaching equality of college access with whites at the undergraduate level. Nevertheless, this accomplishment is far from secure. Progress in numbers enrolled can easily be reversed unless there are structural supports for the new numbers. In the seventies, the support for blacks has come largely from outside the higher education system, particularly from federal financial support and civil rights related incentives. Without renewed vigilance of the courts and legislators, the federal backing could readily diminish.

Traditionally, the status of any social group in higher education has been protected, or impaired, by other important social supports including family, wealth, "old boy" networks, and individual background advantages. These social factors have, consciously and unconsciously, been built into established patterns of selective college admissions. Blacks as a group still do not have the advantages which traditionally support higher education access. Unless there is renewed governmental support for black access and/or unless institutions commit themselves on a long term basis to the protection of equal access, the educational status of blacks will be precarious for a long time to come.

4

Issues in Distribution

Parity between blacks and whites in access to higher education can be achieved and sustained, but judging from current trends in enrollment, the attainment of parity in access will be much less rewarding than most Americans would have expected. Equal access may be coming at a time when educational inequalities have retreated from the threshold of the higher educational system to the inside. To be sure, there are some newly formed ghettos in higher education—colleges, departments and special programs where blacks and other minorities cluster for lack of better opportunities—but these are only part of the problem. The larger problem can be described as a complex of formally independent options in student life in which the options frequently imposed on blacks form cumulative disadvantages for them. The cumulative nature of these disadvantages makes the problem of racially unequal distribution less visible and yet more severe.

An equal or interracially "uniform" distribution of students is not necessary to assure equal educational opportunity; it may not even be desirable. To the extent that black students come from different backgrounds and face different socioeconomic constraints from whites, they may also have different educational needs. Nevertheless, economic, professional, and social responsibilities will be the same or similar for blacks and whites. Some basic uniformities in educational preparation, therefore, will be necessary to assure racially equal opportunity. As argued in *Elusive Equality*, "All inequalities are not equal but any interracial inequality in higher education should be suspect unless and until it is shown not to carry with it race-related disadvantages."[1]

There are many variations in the distribution of enrollment that distinguish black from white students although the degree of difference is rarely statistically large. The largest numerical variations in distribution occur among types of institutions at the system level. In *Elusive Equality,* Morris identifies three categories of variation: systemic, institutional, and programmatic.[2] Systemic variations most relevant to blacks include the distribution of enrollment between majority and black institutions, between two-year and four-year colleges, and between selective and non-selective institutions. In this last category, one can compare leading state universities with state campuses, and well endowed private four-year colleges and research universities with inadequately endowed, non-research institutions.

All these categories of systemic variations in student distribution reflect on the growth of institutional hierarchies in public and private higher education. At the top of the scale in private education, one finds that institutions get a disproportionately large share of all federal funds including research and development grants (R&D) and grants and loans to students based on need. With federal grants to students, however, the inequity is less apparent because of the much higher average family income levels of students in the most selective institutions. In addition, the substantial inequalities in private endowment and contributions among institutions makes the inequities of federal funding seem more out of place.

Such inequities among private institutions can be easily understood given the free-enterprise ethic surrounding traditional American education, but they should be less acceptable in public education. Nevertheless, state supported institutional hierarchies are characteristic of public higher education. At the top of the hierarchies are selective admissions state universities followed by state four-year colleges and two-year colleges at the bottom. While this stratification has been presented as a necessary separation for students of unequal abilities, the difference among institutions varies more widely with wealth than with student and pedagogical performance measures. For example, the dollar values per FTE student for educational and general expenditures, physical plants, and library expenditures are each about three times greater at the top of the hierarchy than at the bottom.[3]

In contrast, one can find substantial but much smaller ratios of difference in the average grades and test scores of students in these institutions. The average SAT scores per institution, for example,

TABLE 4-1. Means and Standard Deviations of the Scholastic Aptitude Tests (SAT), Scholastic Attitude Test–Mathematic (SAT-M), and American College Test (ACT) by Type and Control of Institution: 1974–1975

		SAT	*x SAT-M*	*x ACT*
Private University				
	average:	850	435	19.0
	sd:	438	223	9.9
Public University				
	average:	835	445	18.6
	sd:	330	174	7.5
Private 4 year				
	average:	912	469	20.4
	sd:	256	129	5.9
Public 4 year				
	average:	849	451	18.6
	sd:	203	106	5.0
Private 2 year				
	average:	680	326	15.0
	sd:	356	188	7.9
Public 2 year				
	average:	732	383	16.2
	sd:	305	164	6.8

Source: L. Morris, *Elusive Equality*, Table 3-4.
Note: sd—standard deviation.

vary more within each type of institution than they do across the whole range of institutional types. (see Table 4-1).

Most important, enrollment in these institutions corresponds sharply with the socioeconomic status of the student; the best financed institutions enroll the wealthiest students. This fact describes the special problem for black educational opportunity because it is associated with minority student enrollment. As one moves up the scale of public and private institutional hierarchies the proportion of minority students enrolled tends to decline. A range of supposedly racially neutral barriers to college all come together to limit black access to a larger proportion of the most often chosen schools.

First among these barriers is the cost of attendance. Private institutions cost on the average four times as much as public ones.

Federal grants with their half-cost maximum can only compensate for some of this cost differential. As a consequence, blacks show a slight tendency to be more heavily represented in public institutions. Among four-year colleges and universities, the ratio of black enrollment in public versus private institutions is two to one. Public institutions' tuition and fees can vary by $400 or more from two-year colleges to universities. Cost is not, however, fully considered in view of ability to pay. Middle income students tend to select very high-cost institutions even when the choice involves considerable strain on limited family funds.[4]

In 1976, 45 percent of the freshmen came from families earning less than $15,000 a year. However, 53 percent of freshmen at two-year colleges as compared to 43 percent of freshmen at four-year colleges came from that income group. Only 32 percent of university freshmen came from families with incomes below $15,000 a year.[5] This disparity is further accented by the fact that about 80 percent of freshmen in predominantly black colleges are from families in that income group, and more than half of them have yearly family incomes of less than $8,000 (see Table 4-2).

Not only is federal aid to students an incomplete counter-balance to these inequities, it is also frequently an indirect contributor. In addition to the institutional inequities generated by federal research funding (see Chapter 6), direct aid to students reinforces the coincidence of low black enrollment and high cost. For example, only 23 percent of the BEOG recipients in private institutions are black as compared to 30 percent of the BEOG recipients in public ones. Yet, black students generally depend on BEOG and SEOG funds four to five times as much as white students—a dependence justified by the family income and assets differential. In addition, black families contribute slightly more to their dependents' education, as a percentage of income, than most families. (see Table 4-2).

Similarly between two-year and four-year colleges the percentage of federal grant recipients is biased toward four-year colleges, and yet incomes of two-year colleges are several thousand dollars below those at four-year colleges. The special impact on blacks is easily demonstrable in the enrollment figures. In 1976–77, about 43 percent of all full-time students in higher education were enrolled in two-year colleges while just over 50 percent of blacks were in two-year colleges. When traditionally black institutions are subtracted from the total

TABLE 4-2. Family Income of Freshmen by Institutional Control and Kind, 1976 (In Percent)

	All Institutions	All 2-Year Colleges	All 4-Year Colleges	All Universities	Predominantly Black Colleges	2-Year Colleges		4-Year Colleges				Universities		Predominantly Black Colleges	
						Public	Private	Public	Private Non-sect.	Protestant	Catholic	Public	Private	Public	Private
Estimated Parental Income															
less than $3,000	3.9	5.2	3.6	1.9	17.0	5.2	4.8	4.3	2.5	3.1	2.0	1.9	1.9	20.1	10.3
$3,000-$3,999	2.4	3.1	2.3	1.3	10.4	3.0	3.5	2.8	1.5	2.1	2.1	1.3	1.2	11.8	7.2
$4,000-$5,999	4.4	5.5	4.3	2.5	13.3	5.5	6.1	5.0	3.2	3.7	3.7	2.6	2.3	14.6	10.5
$6,000-$7,999	4.8	5.7	4.8	3.1	11.9	5.7	6.3	5.2	4.2	4.5	4.2	3.2	2.9	12.7	10.2
$8,000-$9,999	6.1	7.3	5.7	4.2	9.6	7.2	7.7	6.1	4.5	6.0	5.2	4.3	3.8	9.6	9.4
$10,000-$12,499	11.1	12.8	10.5	8.6	10.7	12.8	13.3	10.6	9.3	11.4	10.6	9.0	7.2	10.1	11.9
$12,500-$14,999	12.2	13.5	11.0	10.3	7.3	13.6	12.9	12.4	10.2	11.9	11.4	10.8	8.4	6.8	8.6
$15,000-$19,999	17.2	17.3	17.1	17.2	7.4	17.4	16.6	17.1	16.6	16.7	18.4	17.9	14.5	6.2	10.2
$20,000-$24,999	13.6	12.4	13.7	15.6	4.6	12.6	11.0	14.2	13.1	12.8	13.8	16.3	13.1	3.7	6.6
$25,000-$29,999	7.5	6.4	7.6	9.6	2.6	6.5	5.5	7.7	7.8	7.2	7.5	9.7	9.1	1.8	4.3
$30,000-$34,999	5.5	4.1	5.8	7.7	1.7	4.1	4.1	5.6	6.4	5.6	5.8	7.7	7.8	1.0	3.4
$35,000-$39,999	3.3	2.2	3.7	4.9	1.1	2.2	2.5	3.2	4.8	3.9	3.4	4.8	5.3	0.6	2.1
$40,000-$49,999	3.1	1.8	3.5	4.8	1.2	1.8	2.2	2.6	5.3	3.9	3.9	4.4	6.5	0.4	2.9
$50,000 or more	4.9	2.6	5.7	8.3	1.2	2.5	3.5	3.3	10.5	7.0	7.1	6.2	16.0	0.6	2.5
Percentages of Parental Incomes Below $15,000	44.7	53.1	43.0	31.9	80.2	53.0	55.6	48.4	35.4	42.7	40.0	53.1	27.7	85.7	68.1

Source: Alexander Astin, Margo King, and Gerald Richardson, *The American Freshman: National Norms for Fall 1976*, (Los Angeles: CIRP/ACLU, 1977).

enrollment, the disproportionate inclination of black enrollment towards two-year colleges becomes still more striking.

When one considers the types of major fields of study available, the potential economic pay-off of the two-year college associate degree, and the limited probability of transfer, the disadvantage of an already disadvantageous start in two-year colleges comes into focus. We turn to these inequalities next. First it should be noted that the clearest institutional inequality affecting blacks involves the very low retention and graduation rates of two-year colleges, to be discussed in the next chapter.

Institutional Variations

While the data are limited, there are reasons to suspect that black students, once enrolled in a given institution are less likely than most to enjoy the "traditional" mode of college life. Beyond their formal academic presence, blacks are more likely than others not to be fully integrated on a predominantly white campus. For example, where the traditional integration mode for a student is full-time attendance in a degree program while resident on campus, blacks are more likely to be part-time, non-degree and non-resident. Such variations characterize what is called "institutional-attendance" distribution. A related distributional phenomenon is characterized, as defined in *Elusive Equality*, by variations in major-fields of study, but this is discussed separately under the rubric of "institutional-programmatic" distribution.

An additional aspect of institutional-attendance distribution involves social integration in academic and extracurricular activities. Unfortunately, the subject is too complex to be fully dealt with in the context of this report. Yet, the issue should be raised because it reflects a range of unquantified attributes of higher education which are too often obscured by statistical analyses. Educators often try to deal with social integration problems through supportive services but are most effective in dispersed individual cases. When a minority group is involved and the special needs of these students are interdependent, as is generally the case with black students, educators seem to be unprepared. Consequently, black students, as a group, tend to form a second social order at predominantly white institutions. This, in itself, should not be an educational disadvantage, except for the fact that the majority group maintains the primary social ties with faculty, administration and staff. These ties evidently have a substantial impact on student success in college. It is also these ties which illustrate the still unmeasured success of traditionally black institutions in retaining and graduating their students.

Most institutional distribution problems affecting black students are more closely associated with system variations than is social integration. That is, black students tend to have relatively marginal institutional status as a result of the types of institutions towards which their enrollment tends.

In this regard, residency on campus is characteristic of the traditional mode of higher education, but black students are more likely than white students to be in schools which do not have adequate residential facilities. For example, two-year colleges allocated only 8.5 percent of their space to residential facilities in 1970 as compared to about a third of the space at four-year colleges and universities. Second, as one moves up the scale of institutional selectivity, available residential space increases. Moreover, black students are more likely than white students to have grown up and attended college in metropolitan communities where residential facilities are not as readily provided.

The potential for racial inequity in this distribution is suggested by the data which show that blacks, as much or more than whites, would like to attend college out-of-state.[6] The concrete inequity emerges from the finding that resident students are more likely than non-resident students to graduate. Unfortunately, the data do not permit us to give a specific number to this difference.

One should be similarly suspect of racial variation in full-time/part-time attendance patterns. When blacks are more often part-time in college, it is apparently a simple consequence of the types of institutions in which they are enrolled, particularly public and two-year colleges. Given the requirement of most federal student aid, that the student be enrolled half-time or more, there is reason to be concerned. For the present, however, this does not seem to be a problem.

The data on variations in degree/non-degree enrollment are very inadequate. Still, this distribution should be watched because inequities can result both in terms of scholarship funding and in terms of rewards to educational investment. Frequently, non-degree enrollment has the virtue of educational enrichment for people who are not in need of jobs. Obviously, fewer of these comfortable people are blacks. In addition, the economic returns to blacks who do not get a college degree but have some college training, drop off much more rapidly than do the returns to whites.

Programmatic Variations

The distribution of black students across major-fields of study, the primary component of programmatic variation, in the long-run relates to the unequal returns to the education investment just discussed. The way in which black students are distributed is, in terms of expected employment benefits, a problem of maldistribution. Any college degree is helpful to blacks in the job market, but some are much less helpful than others, and blacks in particular tend to end up with the least helpful degrees.

The problem can be briefly illustrated by the finding that about a quarter of all baccalaureate degrees granted to blacks in 1976 were in Education. The undergraduate concentration of blacks in Education sets a pattern that is further inflated in graduate school. In the same year, 61 percent of master's degrees and 55 percent of doctoral degrees granted to blacks were in Education. A large proportion of black undergraduates in other major-fields, particularly the physical sciences, enroll in Education as a second choice when they are unable to pursue their first field.

A smaller over-concentration of blacks occurs in the Social Sciences and Public Affairs areas where job-market expectations are also fairly low. Engineering and related technical fields, which provide relatively high incomes to blacks with baccalaureates, are the most underrepresented. For example, 8.9 percent of all black undergraduates were enrolled in technical fields as compared to 12.4 percent of white in 1974.

Some of the racial variation in distribution by major field can be explained by socioeconomic and demographic factors. On the socioeconomic level, low-income students, particularly blacks, may have more role-models to emulate in Education than in technical fields. In addition, low-cost institutions tend to be especially deficient in the equipment needed by modern science majors. On the demographic level, a slight majority of black undergraduates are female as com-

TABLE 4-3. Distribution of Degrees Awarded to Students, By Race and Selected Major Field of Study 1976

	BACCALAUREATES		*MASTER'S*		*DOCTORATES*	
Major Field	*All Students*	*Black Students*	*All Students*	*Black Students*	*All Students*	*Black Students*
GRAND TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Agriculture	2.1	0.4	1.1	0.4	2.7	1.5
Architecture	1.0	0.4	1.0	1.0	0.2	0.4
Biological Sciences	5.9	3.9	2.1	1.1	10.1	4.3
Business & Management	15.5	16.1	13.6	7.6	2.8	1.4
Education	16.9	24.0	41.4	61.1	23.0	55.2
Engineering	4.9	2.3	5.1	1.1	8.3	1.6
Health Professions	5.8	4.6	4.0	3.1	1.7	1.3
Mathematics	1.7	1.4	1.2	0.6	2.5	0.7
Physical Sciences	2.3	1.1	1.7	0.7	10.1	3.4
Psychology	5.4	5.4	2.5	2.0	7.6	5.4
Public Affairs	3.6	5.6	5.5	7.9	0.9	2.4
Social Sciences	13.7	18.6	5.1	4.3	12.2	9.6
All Others *Major Field*	21.2	16.2	15.7	9.1	18.0	12.8

Source: Preliminary data on Fall 1976 enrollment from the DHEW, National Center for Educational Statistics. Reproduced in National Advisory Committee on Black Higher Education and Black Colleges and Universities. "Higher Education Equity: The Crisis of Appearance Versus Reality," *First Annual Report*, 1977. Washington, D.C. 1978, Chart 8, p. 24.

pared to the inverse ratio of 3 to 2 white males to females. Since females tend to major more in Education and less in technical fields, one would expect the racial distribution to reflect the sex factor. However, none of these can fully explain the racial difference. One difference is that black males are more heavily concentrated in Education than white females as Table 4-4 shows.

A crucial factor in the racially uneven major-field distribution, therefore, rests with the higher education system itself. Sharing in that responsibility, both through its "institutional" aid practices and indirectly through its student aid practices, is the federal government.

In addition to the cost factor, the type of institution obviously affects a student's opportunity to select some major-fields. Beyond the vocational option, two-year colleges tend to have fairly restricted science programs. Traditionally, black colleges also tend to have

TABLE 4-4. Major Field Distribution of Undergraduates at Four Year Colleges and Universities By Race and Sex: 1974

	White		*Black*		*Total*	
	Four-Year Institutions					
	Male	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
Education	7.9	16.2	23.5	26.3	14.8	21.5
Business	20.6	22.4	7.5	14.0	14.7	18.0
Social Science	14.8	19.7	13.6	17.6	14.3	18.6
Natural Science	7.6	4.9	5.1	4.4	6.5	4.6
Tech. Science	17.8	11.3	3.7	3.0	11.5	6.9
Professions	.9	.6	6.0	4.7	3.2	2.8
Soc. Wk. & Pub. Health	1.0	1.9	3.0	4.1	1.9	3.1
Architecture	1.7	.8	.5	.2	1.2	.4
Agriculture	3.9	1.2	1.3	.3	2.7	.7
Computer Science	.8	1.0	.4	.7	.6	.8
Other	23.1	20.0	35.6	24.8	28.7	22.5
Total (100% =)	(1,692)	(132)	(1,358)	(149)	(3,050)	(282)
% Undecided	26.9	19.7	17.4	19.3	17.1	39.4
	Total Undergraduate Enrollment					
Education	6.7	12.6	19.6	20.8	12.4	16.8
Business	21.2	23.4	11.8	18.7	17.0	21.0
Social Science	11.9	14.4	11.2	13.5	11.6	14.0
Natural Science	7.0	3.7	4.6	3.5	5.9	3.6
Tech. Science	19.5	15.4	3.4	2.7	12.4	8.9
Professions[a]	1.0	.8	5.1	3.9	2.8	2.4
Soc. Wk. & Pub. Health	2.9	4.2	8.0	9.4	5.1	6.8
Architecture	1.5	.6	.4	.2	1.0	.4
Agriculture	3.4	.9	1.1	.3	2.4	.6
Computer Science	1.2	1.8	.7	1.4	1.0	1.6
Other[b]	23.7	22.3	34.2	25.8	28.4	24.1
Total (100% =)	(2,196)	(198)	(1,734)	(206)	(3,930)	(404)
% Undecided	19.3	20.9	19.5	19.7	19.4	20.3

[a] Includes two-year institutions.

Source: Gail Thomas, "Equality of Representation of Race and Sex Groups in Higher Education: Institutional and Program Enrollment Status," Center for Social Organization of Schools: Baltimore, Maryland (October 1978, Report No. 263).

relatively high concentrations of Education, Social Science, and Humanities majors. However, the limits of the black college factor as an explanation is illustrated by the fact that blacks are highly underrepresented in the Humanities. Moreover, traditionally black institutions account for less than 20 percent of black enrollment in higher education in the last few years.

The occasional supposition that blacks are underrepresented in many fields because these fields are too intellectually demanding also does not hold up under close inspection. While Humanities and Architecture, for example, are certainly not easy disciplines, they do not involve the same kind of training as the sciences, for which the supposition of intellectual difficulty is most often proposed, and yet blacks are about as underrepresented in these fields as any.

The most striking institutional factor in major-field distribution is faculty behavior. Several researchers have found that the political and race-related ideologies or faculty vary substantially according to discipline.[7] At the same time, faculty attitudes and compatibility with students play a major role in course selection. Faculty, at least unconsciously, contribute to the inclination of students towards some fields and away from others. In this regard, the correspondence between the major-field distribution of black undergraduates and Table 4-5 below on faculty attitudes and behavior toward black students is informative.

The federal government through its College Work-Study program, may often be an unwitting contributor to the biased selection practices of faculty. Black students, as will be shown in Chapter 6, experience greater difficulty than other students in getting academically relevant jobs with college faculty. More important, the virtual absence of regulations for aid to students, which take into account racially unequal major-field distribution, allows the situation to persist.

Finally, the federal government has previously taken the initiative to boost the number of science majors in higher education. However, its biggest effort, the National Defense Loan Act, came in 1958 when there were too few blacks for distribution to have a racial context. In 1976–77, when groups of black scientists proposed legislative programs under the National Science Foundation (NSF) to meet a national need for more black scientists, the federal response was, at best, discouraging.

TABLE 4-5. Departmental Supportiveness of Black Students: Rank Ordered by Discipline

	Discipline	*Mean*	*Minimum*	*Maximum*	*Deviation Standard*
Humanities	History	5.28	5.10	5.05	.15
	English	5.04	4.53	5.82	.50
Social Sciences	Economics	4.84	4.40	5.33	.33
	Political Science	4.81	4.33	5.50	.48
	Psychology	4.52	3.67	5.58	.68
	Sociology	4.38	3.67	5.20	.59
Natural Sciences	Math	4.40	3.33	5.33	.76
	Biology	4.06	3.73	4.40	.27
	Chemistry	3.77	2.86	5.00	.78

NOTE: Index Range = 2 to S

Source: James Mingle, "Faculty and Departmental Response to Increased Black Student Enrollment," *Journal of Higher Education*, 49,3 (1978), Table 1, p. 206.

Of the federal funds going to traditionally blacks institutions, only a small portion of them have been directed toward the sciences. On the other hand, federal R&D funds, including those administered by NSF, have flowed liberally to prestigious and not-so-prestigious white institutions enabling them to develop their science programs without regard to minority presence. Unintentional as it may be, federal research funding constitutes a kind of institutional aid primarily limited to white institutions and with few obligations for the institutional commitment to equal opportunity for blacks.

Graduate and Professional School Distribution

The problem of distribution experienced by blacks at the undergraduate level is exacerbated at the graduate level. Using 12 percent as the point of departure for measuring parity, the proportion of blacks in all areas of specialization shows consistent underrepresentation. In no field are blacks represented at a level comparable to their proportion of the graduate school age population, 12 percent. With the possible exception of Education and "Public Affairs and Services," black representation does not come close to an equitable level.

In the distribution of master's degrees conferred in 1976, blacks received 9.7 percent of degrees in Education. This constitutes 61 percent of all master's degrees awarded to blacks. Obviously, there are very few remaining to receive other degrees. However, given the smaller numbers of all students in the field of Public Affairs and Services, blacks managed to reach 9.4 percent of degrees granted, or about two-thirds of the racial parity percentage.

The distribution of Ph.D.'s awarded follows a rather similar pattern, but blacks are even more underrepresented on the whole. About 55 percent of Ph.D.'s awarded blacks are in Education. However, there are some small surprises in this distribution compared to the M.A. Blacks are slightly better represented in Public Affairs and Services, 9.1 percent, than in Education, 8.5 percent. Yet, the former constitutes only 2.4 percent of black Ph.D.'s (see Appendix Table 4).

At the Ph.D. level there is a slight decline in the proportion of black engineers, down to .68 from 1.5, but the actual number, 19 blacks, is too small to be very significant. On the other hand, the large decline in the proportion of blacks with Social Science Ph.D.'s, to 2.8 percent, and M.A.'s to 5.6 percent, is significant. Considering the relatively small market value of an M.A. compared to a Ph.D. in a social science, this drop is especially disappointing. Moreover, considering the fairly high market value of an M.S. in Engineering compared to a Ph.D. in the same field, the black proportion in engineering is not particularly comforting.

Current Graduate School Enrollment

The distribution of graduate students by major-field shows that the racially uneven distribution of the preceding year's degree recipients is being continued. Fortunately, however, the black percentage of all graduate enrollment has risen to 6 percent, from an estimated 3.3 to 5.2 percent in 1973–74 (see Table 4-6).

Unfortunately, the most current data do not allow us to separate out black enrollment in Education and Social Science, etc. However, the category of "all others" in Table 4-6, the one in which these two majors are classified, is also clearly the largest in terms of the black proportion. In fact, it is the only category in which the black percentage, 7.22, is about the same as the black percentage of total

TABLE 4-6. Total Graduate Enrollment by Race and Ethnicity and Selected Major Fields 1976–77

	Black		*Minority*		*White*		
Fields	*Number*	*Per cent*	*Number*	*Per cent*	*Number*	*Per cent*	*Total*
Agriculture & Natural Sciences	251	1.61	721	4.64	11,806	76.11	15,510
Architecture & Environmental Design	518	5.29	1,038	10.60	7,824	79.92	9,790
Biological Sciences	1,125	2.63	2,938	6.87	36,582	85.57	42,746
Business and Management	6,086	4.12	11,970	8.11	125,765	85.21	147,590
Engineering	824	1.42	4,287	7.40	40,227	69.48	57,889
Law	58	1.66	161	4.61	3,034	87.05	3,485
Physical Science	632	1.80	1,924	5.48	27,967	79.77	35,059
All Others	55,851	7.22	89,112	11.52	653,654	84.55	773,062
TOTAL	65,345	6.02	121,152	10.33	908,859	83.75	1,085,131

Source: Analysis of data from DHEW/OCR, *Opening Fall Enrollment, 1976.*

graduate enrollment, 6.02. The comparatively extreme inadequacy of black enrollment in engineering, 1.42 percent, perhaps best symbolizes the wider inadequacy of educational opportunity in graduate and professional schools.

Several relationships in the data seem to be endemic to the status of blacks in advanced education. First, the proportions of blacks at all levels are well below racial parity. In engineering, black representation is exceptionally small. Second, as low as these proportions are, blacks are still more underrepresented at the advanced levels than their undergraduate numbers or proportions would lead one to expect. In other words, blacks are 2 percent of undergraduate engineering degree recipients in 1976, but less than one percent of master's degrees and only 0.3 percent of doctoral degrees. Referring to the earlier years when the 1976 master's degree recipients should have received their baccalaureate degrees, blacks were still more highly represented at the undergraduate level. Going back one or two years would be appropriate but one can refer back four years to 1972 and the proportion of blacks available from undergraduate school is still higher than the black proportion of master's degrees.

Third, the fact that progress does not have to be so slow is demonstrated by the more rapid progress of female participation in engineering. For example, the number of women master's degree recipients more than doubled between 1973 and 1976, while the number of blacks increased only about fifty percent. The fact that the more rapid progress of women is not simply a function of their greater availability is evidenced by the undergraduate portions. The rate of undergraduate growth for women is equally rapid, though not necessarily sufficient, in the same three years while that for blacks is equally undramatic (see Appendix Table 5).

The problem of distribution in 1976–77 can, to some extent, be penetrated by data from any recent study inasmuch as the limited data on distribution by field indicate that the distribution of blacks across fields has not changed substantially in at least a decade. Thus, we can gain some current insights from the 1975 Office for Civil Rights data on distribution. As shown in Table 4-7, Education and Social Science graduate enrollments are identifiable.

One can see that Education constitutes the dominant part of black graduate enrollment. Moreover, recalling that 60 percent of black MA's and 55 percent of black PhD's are in the same field in 1976, there is reason to believe that black attrition is exceptionally high in the other fields. Again, the length of time factor may be a real problem in reaching such a conclusion about PhD's but it should not be so for M.A.'s. Two years, 1974 to 1976 in this case, are the standard length of time for completing an MA degree. Accordingly, the increase in the proportion of blacks in Education of 21 percent from enrollment in 1974 to graduation in 1976 must represent a substantial difference in the internal graduate school experience of blacks in Education as opposed to other fields. The evidence indicates high black attrition in those other fields where black enrollment is already very low.

Professional Schools

Educational progress for blacks in graduate school has been shown to be painfully slow, almost to the point of stagnation. In the assessment of educational opportunity for blacks in professional schools there are no "qualifiers" needed. The modest progress of the

TABLE 4-7. Major Field Distribution of Black Students in Traditionally Black and Traditionally Non-Black Graduate Institutions 1974

Major Field	*Black Males*	*Black Females*	*Total Blacks*
		Traditionally Black Institutions	
Education	30.70	45.70	38.97
Business	9.53	5.73	7.43
Social Science	12.24	9.38	10.66
Natural Science	6.12	4.17	5.04
Technical Science	7.45	3.04	5.02
Professionals[a]	.21	.13	.17
Social Work & Pub. Health	1.86	4.64	3.39
Architecture	1.44	.22	.76
Agriculture	2.08	.26	1.08
Computer Science	.05	.04	.05
Other[b]	28.31	26.69	27.42
Total (100% =)	(1,879)	(2,304)	(4,183)
		Traditionally Non-Black Institutions	
Major Fields			
Education	26.24	41.55	33.79
Business	12.58	4.48	8.58
Social Science	16.61	11.78	4.22
Natural Science	2.50	1.83	2.17
Technical Science	6.65	1.44	4.08
Professionals[a]	1.76	3.07	2.40
Social Work & Pub. Health	3.58	8.00	5.76
Architecture	2.88	1.41	2.16
Agriculture	1.47	.13	.81
Computer Science	.52	.31	.42
Other[b]	25.20	25.99	25.59
Total (100% =)	(8,599)	(8,371)	(16,970)

[a] Professions refer to students who are in Nursing, Pharmacy, Pre-Law, Pre-Medicine, and similar pre-professional programs offered at the undergraduate level.

[b] Other majors include: Foreign Language, Home Economics, Library Science, and the precoded category designated in the survey as "others."

Source: Gail Thomas, *Equality of Representation of Race and Sex Group in Higher Education,* Center for Social Organization of Schools: Baltimore, Maryland, June 1978.

TABLE 4-8. Total Professional Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity and Selected Professional Fields, 1976–1977

	Black		*Other Minority*		*White*		
Fields	*Number*	*Per cent*	*Number*	*Per cent*	*Number*	*Per cent*	*Total*
Agriculture & National Resources	0	.00	2	8.69	16	69.56	23
Architecture & Environmental Design	1	4.00	2	8.00	23	92.00	25
Biological Sciences	2	2.94	3	4.41	62	91.17	68
Business and Management	40	5.65	48	6.78	621	87.83	707
Engineering	0	.00	1	1.19	78	92.85	84
Dentistry	822	4.04	2,013	9.90	18,033	88.73	20,322
Medicine	3,454	5.93	6,780	11.65	50,668	87.09	58,178
Veterinary Medicine	125	2.04	258	4.21	5,849	95.47	6,126
Law	5,372	4.60	10,472	8.97	105,594	90.52	116,647
Physical Science	1	6.25	3	18.75	11	68.75	16
All Others	1,364	3.12	3,087	7.08	39,098	89,69	43,588
TOTAL	11,181	4.54	22,669	9.22	220,059	89.53	234,790

Source: Department of Health, Education, and Welfare/OCR. Analysis of data from DHEW/OCR, "Opening Fall Enrollment, 1976."

early 1970's has not merely come to a standstill; access for blacks to professional schools, like medicine and law, is apparently regressing.

The 1976–77 black enrollment in the professional schools could probably not have been predicted from data on enrollment in the preceding years. The rate of growth up to 1975–76 would probably have led to an overestimation of black percentages for the subsequent year. For those concerned with equal educational opportunity, the facts, as shown in Table 4-8, are perhaps too disappointing to have been calmly anticipated.

Black enrollment in professional schools amounts to only 4.5 percent. Doubling that figure would still leave blacks well below parity. Of the significant professional fields in terms of enrollment size, Medicine and Business and Management are slightly ahead of the rest with 5.9 percent and 5.6 percent black enrollment, respectively. Law school enrollment is third with 4.6 percent black, and second to medicine among the major professions. Enrollment in Business and Management (this figure excludes masters of business administration or MBA) is growing overall but is still too small to be meaningfully compared with Medicine and Law.

Other professional enrollments, such as Engineering and Physical Science, represent very specialized degree programs offered at only a few institutions. In engineering, for example, there is a specialized masters intended for practicing engineers, but the degree has little, if any, value that cannot be acquired in a regular graduate, "non-professional" program.

If there is anything in these data which can make medical school enrollments look good by comparison, from the perspective of equal opportunity supporters, it is the remarkably low level of black enrollment in veterinary medicine, 0.2 percent. Yet , a brief look at changes in black medical school enrollment from year to year will strain even the positive attitude—a subject to which we will turn shortly.

About 92 percent of all blacks in higher education in 1976 were undergraduates; 7 percent were graduate students; and except for the unclassified students, the remaining 1.2 percent of blacks, just over 11,000 students were enrolled in professional education.

In 1974–75, blacks numbered 9,334 students in professional schools. Over the next two years the number of blacks went up about 20 percent. In absolute numbers that is an increase of 1,947 students —not very impressive. And yet, total enrollment in professional schools has gone up even faster. In meaningful terms, therefore, blacks are losing ground. Their proportion of enrollment in professional schools has actually declined. Black enrollment has thus declined proportionately from 5.05 percent in 1974–75 to 4.54 percent in 1976–77. White enrollment has not only gone up, it also accounts for a larger proportion of all enrollment.

Medicine and Law are first and second respectively in the proportions of blacks holding degrees in the larger major fields. Again also veterinary medicine has the smallest black representation of the larger fields. It should be noted that the black proportions of degrees granted in Medicine and Law compared to enrollment in those fields are almost identical. This could be a good sign—that black attrition is no higher than average inasmuch as the degrees are granted to students from preceding years. Conversely, the similarity of proportions at input in

TABLE 4-9. Black and White Student Enrollment in Professional Schools 1974 and 1976, and Rates of Growth

Race	*Enrollment*		*Change in Enrollment*	
	1974	1976	Increase in #	Increase in %
Black/White	184,742	231,240	46,498	25.17
White	175,408	220,059	44,651	25.46
Black	9,334	11,181	1,847	19.79

Source: Reanalysis of DHEW/OCR, "Opening Fall Enrollment, 1974" and 1976 preliminary OCR and Gail Thomas, *Equality of Representation of Race and Sex Group in Higher Education,* Center for Social Organization of Schools: Baltimore, Maryland, June 1978.

1976–77 with those of output in 1975–76 may reflect a real decline in black enrollment or a greater increase in all enrollment.

Total professional school graduates increased every year from 1965 to 1976—slightly more than doubling in that period. Yet, NCES estimates of degrees conferred for 1977 show a decline from the 1976 level of 62,649 to 61,800 graduates. Consequently, the black proportion of current enrollment should be noticeably greater than the black proportion of the 1976 graduates, if black students are making progress as a group. Since total numbers are declining, the black proportion of students can only remain the same or decline when the absolute number of blacks declines. It goes almost without saying, that 4 to 5 percent black participation in the professions is too small a level for absolute numerical reductions to be willfully contemplated, whatever the changes in the total professional student population.

In sum, law schools and medical schools, which together dominate professional school enrollment, once showed reasonable promise in expanding educational opportunity for blacks. That promise has not only gone unfulfilled; it has evidently been retracted. Moreover, evidence from other professional schools indicates the same loss of commitment to equal educational opportunity. Graduate schools have continued to take small steps in the direction of equal opportunity, but the steps are so small it is hard to be sure that any real progress is being made. In fact, "stagnation" is an accurate description of the status of blacks in graduate education; for professional schools this word would be generous.

5

Issues in Persistence

If the distribution of blacks in higher education were more equitable and if access to higher education were unimpaired, equal educational opportunity for blacks would still be remote unless racial parity in persistence was achieved. Persistence is defined as the composite of retention and graduation rates, and parity implies that blacks are retained and graduated from college at the same rate as the majority of students. Of course, higher education can have a value in itself beyond the degrees awarded. It can, and should be, a culturally, intellectually, and socially rewarding experience whether carried to some formal completion or sampled in parts. Nevertheless, the acquisition of the degree has a distinct economic value which should never be overlooked because, for one, students in the late seventies often focused on the marketability of the degree primarily. Moreover, the relative value of the whole experience for students distributed across quite different institutions and programs is probably unequal if some choose to leave while others choose to stay.

The second ISEP report, *More Promise Than Progress,* distinguishes between dropping out of college and "stopping-out." Students who stop out of college interrupt their studies on short-term bases for educationally external reasons such as illness and personal interests, or for educationally complementary reasons such as research and training activities. While the reasons for stopping-out are easily understood and the phenomenon is becoming more common, the stopout is very difficult to identify through aggregate data. More important, stopping-out is something of a luxury, and black students seldom leave college for such benign reasons. This report, therefore, considers the continuous progress towards a college degree as the most reliable yardstick for equal educational opportunity.

Since dropping out and stopping-out are often tied to an unhappy or stressful college experience, there is good reason to believe that racial inequality in persistence is more the result of racially unequal institutional, including financial, conditions than a consequence of the individual deficiencies of black students. At some point, however, persistence involves a complexity of individual and social factors as *More Promise Than Progress* observes:

> Persistence is an indirect measure of institutional and student response. Although the tendency may be to credit the student if he graduates and blame the college if he fails, the truth lies somewhere in between. Persistence, as a measure of equal educational opportunity is the result of the interaction of the minority student with his classmates, instructors, supportive personnel, and with the academic and social environment of the college.[1]

Concurring with numerous reports, ISEP reports have found a substantially higher attrition rate for black students than for whites. In 1974, 57 percent of the white freshmen who entered college in 1971 were enrolled or had graduated compared to only 41 percent of the black freshmen. Since then some studies have concluded that, by holding social class statistically constant, progress towards racial parity in persistence has been made. Yet, the optimistic conclusions and the data on which they rely, seem to be too ambiguous to accept, largely because the black/white persistence ratio has not substantially changed. Some data do indicate that most of the higher black attrition can be explained by income inequality, but that still does not explain away the problem. Blacks still drop out more than whites at a ratio of 4 to 3, and that is the problem which education policy should seek to correct.

Similarly, some of the black attrition in higher education can be explained in terms of distribution, but distribution cannot explain away the problem. Unequal distribution is part of the problem of unequal persistence rates. Blacks are more often enrolled in institutions and programs where attrition is high for all groups. In addition to the high rate of attrition at two-year colleges, a subject to which we will return shortly, students who graduate with an associate degree may not be expected to continue toward a baccalaureate. It makes perfect sense to stop after two years if that's all one wants or needs.

Blacks, however, have been shown to want a baccalaureate degree as much or more than whites and to need the degree much more when they seek employment. More important for education policy, if we assume that blacks will be satisfied with an abbreviated educational experience, then the analysis, if not the goal, of equal educational opportunity will be lost.

Degrees Awarded

The first ISEP report finds that in 1974 only 2.6 percent of all baccalaureate degrees granted went to blacks. In the same year the census reports show that blacks were more than 8 percent of the total enrollment. Four and five years earlier, when the 1974 graduating class should have entered college, blacks were between 6 and 7 percent of the freshman class. If there were racial parity in persistence, blacks would have had a percentage of the 1974 class twice as large as it was. What happened to the other half of the black freshman class, and is the same thing happening to more recent classes?

The greatest attrition occurred for those entering two-year colleges, and the pattern seems not to be changing. In 1970, 29 percent of blacks and 38 percent of whites who had entered two-year college four years earlier graduated. Correspondingly, 42 percent of blacks and 47 percent of whites in four-year colleges graduated. By 1975–76, about 59,000 blacks, or 6.4 percent of the class received a baccalaureate degree. At the same time, black undergraduate enrollment was 10.2 percent. Four years earlier in 1972, blacks were 8.7 percent of all undergraduates, and a slightly larger percentage of the freshman class. Consequently, were persistence not a part of racial inequality, the black proportion of the 1976 graduating class would have been at least a third larger.

The impact of racially unequal student distribution by major-field of study on persistence can also be illustrated by comparing enrollment and degrees awarded. Theoretically, if race were not a factor influencing what students "choose" to specialize in, and influencing rates of persistence across major-fields, blacks and whites would be distributed across major-fields in about the same proportions when they graduated. From the data on degrees awarded in 1975–76, in only three of the twenty-three major-fields listed in Table 5-1 do

Table 5-1. Bachelor's Degrees Conferred in Institutions of Higher Education By Race, Ethnicity and Major Field, 1975–1976

	American Indian		*Black*		*Asian or Pacific Islander*	
	Hispanic	*Native*	*Non-Hispanic*			
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Agriculture and Natural Resources	136	.70	267	1.37	171	.86
Architecture and Environmental Design	35	.38	258	2.83	183	2.00
Area Studies	10	.33	106	3.51	67	2.22
Biological Sciences	143	.26	2328	4.25	1218	2.23
Business and Management	426	.29	9503	6.60	1852	1.29
Communications	65	.30	1275	5.97	182	.85
Computer and Information	7	.13	323	5.97	124	2.22
Education	742	.47	14229	9.08	836	.53
Engineering	150	.33	1370	2.99	971	2.12
Fine and Applied Arts	155	.27	1724	4.09	607	1.44
Foreign Languages	33	.21	531	3.44	178	1.15
Health Professors	166	.31	2742	5.06	865	1.60
Home Economics	75	.42	1069	6.18	226	1.31
Law	1	.19	27	5.16	1	.19
Letters	161	.31	2468	4.75	374	.72
Library Science	4	.49	75	9.26	1	.12
Mathematics	54	.34	800	5.03	314	1.97
Physical Sciences	62	.29	647	3.03	312	1.46
Psychology	192	.38	3219	6.44	614	1.23
Public Affairs and Services	180	.50	3311	9.93	332	.96
Social Sciences	513	.40	10990	8.65	1403	1.10
Theology	10	.19	148	2.80	32	.60
Interdisciplinary Studies	178	.56	1773	5.54	480	1.44
National Total (2,063 Institutions)	3498	.38	5918[illegible]	6.38	11323	1.22

Source: U.S. HEW/Office for Civil Rights, Fall 1976.

blacks constitute 9 percent of the baccalaureate recipients. These fields are Public Affairs and Services, Library Science and, of course, Education. After Education, Business and Management and Social Science contain the largest numbers of blacks and all these fields are below the 9.3 percent level of black enrollment. They are also clearly below the level of racial parity. (See table 5-1).

Hispanic		Total Minority		White Non-Hispanic		Non-Resident Alien		
#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	Total
218	1.12	792	4.07	18357	94.35	308	1.58	19457
221	2.42	697	7.64	8107	88.89	316	3.46	9120
159	5.26	342	11.31	2646	87.53	35	1.16	3023
1495	2.73	5184	9.47	48613	88.81	941	1.72	54738
3973	2.76	15754	10.94	125286	86.98	2991	2.08	144031
443	2.07	1965	9.20	19167	89.74	226	1.06	21358
100	1.79	554	9.92	4811	86.19	217	3.89	5582
4447	2.84	20254	12.94	135514	86.57	770	.49	156538
1226	2.67	3717	8.11	38971	84.98	3171	6.91	45859
901	2.14	3387	8.04	38204	90.64	556	1.32	42147
1277	8.27	2019	13.07	13050	84.52	371	2.40	15440
1260	2.33	5033	9.30	48465	89.52	640	1.18	54138
269	1.56	1639	9.48	15467	89.46	184	1.06	17290
7	1.34	36	6.88	485	92.73	2	.38	523
1489	2.86	4492	8.64	46990	90.39	504	.97	51986
3	.37	83	10.25	725	89.51	2	.25	810
338	2.12	1506	9.46	14103	88.60	308	1.94	15917
377	1.77	1398	6.56	19400	91.00	521	2.44	21319
1666	3.33	5641	11.39	43795	87.62	496	.99	49982
1137	3.41	4960	14.88	28133	94.39	244	.73	33337
4135	3.26	17041	13.42	108118	85.14	1831	1.44	126990
65	1.23	255	4.82	4911	92.75	129	2.44	5295
984	3.07	3395	10.61	28294	88.42	309	.97	31998
26220	2.83	100228	10.81	811772	87.56	15085	1.63	927085

Identifying Attrition

Perhaps, the first problem in dealing with persistence through public policy is the lack of any sustained data collection and analysis directed at policy development in higher education. Of course, education researchers, with and without government support, have sought to understand the problem and its causes. However, a separate initiative is needed to guide government action—action which can be effective whether or not root causes of attrition are penetrated.

Nevertheless, the National Longitudinal Study (NLS) represents an exceptional attempt. In following through repeated surveys, the high school senior class of 1972, NLS provides a valuable picture of the college senior class of 1976 and of those who did not go that far. First, NLS data show that only 44 percent of the 1972 high school seniors enrolled in college immediately after high school. About 30 percent of the whole class enrolled in four-year colleges or universities and about 15 percent in two-year colleges. Only two years later, 8 percent of the initial group had dropped out of four year colleges and universities. Another 8 percent, more than half of the initial entrants, had dropped out of two-year colleges.

Four years later, only 18 percent of the class of 1972 had earned baccalaureate degrees. This amounts to 41 percent of those who initially enrolled in college in 1972 and 62 percent of those who initially enrolled for four years. Clearly, attrition in the first two years presents a serious problem, and the most serious element of that problem resides with two-year colleges. Nevertheless, attrition in the last two years still requires attention.

By 1975, according to NLS data, blacks and Hispanics clearly had the largest proportion of casualties in the struggle to gain a college degree. The attrition losses blacks suffered, the survey shows, cannot be explained by academic difficulties. Higher attrition among low income groups explains a large part of the disadvantage for blacks in four-year colleges but not for those in two-year colleges.[2] As Table 5-2 shows, even upper income white students have high withdrawal rates at two-year colleges.

About a third of the black students in the lower socioeconomic quartile dropped out of four-year institutions by 1975 as compared to a majority of black students from two-year colleges. A related, but less pronounced, difference exists between public and private institutions. After two years, 28.5 percent of the class of 1972 had withdrawn from public colleges as compared to 22.3 percent of those in private ones. For both institutional categories, the situation for blacks is even more serious than these data show because blacks are disproportionately concentrated in the institutions with the highest attrition. When institutions are ranked in terms of selectivity, a simi-

TABLE 5-2. Percent Withdrawn After 2 Years, by Race/Ethnicity and Socioeconomic Background

Socioeconomic background	*4 year institution*	*2 year institution*
Lower quartile	32.5	51.3
Black	32.5	51.3
Hispanic	25.2	48.2
White	33.6	44.8
Middle 2 quartiles		
Black	23.7	45.9
White	27.7	39.5
Upper quartile		
White	17.8	33.9

BACKGROUND

The information reported is derived from answers to selected questions from the first and second followup surveys for the National Longitudinal Study of the High School Class of 1972 (NLS). The base-year survey (Spring 1972), sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics with support from elements of the Office of Education, used a stratified, two-stage national probability sample consisting of approximately 21,000 high school seniors in 1,200 schools and achieved a response rate of 77 percent. The first followup survey was conducted in fall 1973, with a response rate of 92 percent; the second followup, in fall 1974, with 89 percent. A third followup survey has recently been completed.

Source: Andrew Kolstad. "Attrition from College: The Class of 1972 Two and One-Half Years After High School Graduation," National Longitudinal Study of the High School Class of 1972, NCES, Washington, D.C., 1977. Table 7.

lar disadvantage, impacting on institutions where blacks tend to be concentrated, emerges from less selective institutions.[3]

When the "normal" four years of undergraduate education had expired in 1976, about 58 percent of all students who had graduated from high school four years earlier will have enrolled in college at some time. From that number, about one third of the white students and a quarter of the black students graduated from college in 1976. That means that 19 percent of the 1972 white high school graduates and 12 percent of the black ones received a baccalaureate degree. That also means that there is a 4 to 3 black/white ratio of attrition disregarding associate degrees.

Given the increased frequency with which students interrupt their studies, stop-out, and the lack of data, we cannot be sure how many returned. Yet, the number of returned graduates should not be expected to alter the 4 to 3 black/white attrition ratio. Given institutional characteristics and socioeconomic conditions, one can expect the 4 to 3 inequality ratio in persistence to continue unless there is some concerted intervention to change those conditions.

Conditions of Retention/Attrition

On the individual level, black and white students seem to drop out for similar reasons. However, available research data and analysis have not produced thorough non-conflicting descriptions of those reasons. The explanations of attrition on which research agrees are usually too nebulous to guide policy. Yet, some factors in attrition are sufficient to permit meaningful action.

First among these is the financial condition of the student. As the preceding table strongly illustrates, low income students are the most likely victims of attrition. Other data also indicate that the problem is manageable through education policy because income does not have to be redistributed. Adequate financial aid correlates as strongly with student retention as the family wealth of students. In addition, a mixture of financial aid and college work-study can be successful in retention if the work is academically complementary.

While socio-psychological correlates of retention are hard to pin down, those affecting black students particularly can be summarized by the concepts of involvement and social integration.[4] An overwhelming problem for the black student on a white campus is his/her relative isolation, estrangement from established campus organizations and lack of rapport with the faculty.

Referring to the chapter on the sociopsychological environment of education, one can easily see how many of the known correlates of attrition would have an especially high impact on blacks. Given the range of special needs that the typical black student brings to college, previously moderate institutional deficiencies can become major problems. In this regard, ACT and NCHEMS researchers have developed a list of institutional characteristics which negatively affect retention. In this list (see Table 5-3) one can see that many of the negative institutional characteristics could logically have a heavy impact on black students.

TABLE 5-3. Negative Campus Characteristics by Type of Institution

	Average Rating				
	2-Yr. Pub.	*2-Yr. Pri.*	*4-Yr. Pub.*	*4-Yr. Pri.*	*Total*
N =	255	52	201	350	858
Negative campus characteristics					
1. Inadequate academic advising	2.87	2.33	3.61	2.90	3.01
2. Inadequate curricular offerings	2.65	2.56	2.90	2.93	2.80
3. Conflict between class/job	3.78	2.12	2.86	2.08	2.77
4. Inadequate financial aid	2.40	2.50	2.64	2.91	2.66
5. Inadequate counseling support system	2.53	2.29	2.76	2.56	2.58
6. Inadequate extracurricular programs	2.47	2.86	2.31	2.78	2.58
7. Inadequate academic support services	2.40	2.10	2.80	2.52	2.52
8. Inadequate cultural/social growth	2.42	2.14	2.52	2.01	2.51
9. Inadequate career planning services	2.58	2.20	2.74	2.34	2.48
10. Inadequate student-faculty contact	2.37	1.60	3.01	2.06	2.33
11. Insufficient intellectual challenge	2.35	2.06	2.42	2.27	2.31
12. Lack of faculty care and concern	2.30	1.58	2.86	2.01	2.26
13. Inadequate part-time employment	2.37	2.08	2.49	2.11	2.26
14. Unsatisfactory living accommodations	2.04	2.28	2.24	2.40	2.25
15. Low quality of teaching	2.21	2.00	2.45	2.10	2.21
16. Lack of staff care and concern	2.24	1.69	2.50	2.07	2.20
17. Restrictive rules and regulations	1.38	2.63	1.58	2.08	1.79

Source: Philip E. Beal and Lee Noel, "What Works In Student Retention," American College Testing Program and National Center for Higher Education, Management System, Draft (1979).

Among other factors, advising (1), conflict between class and job (3), counseling (5), support services (7), and student-faculty contact (10) are particularly important to blacks both because of their backgrounds and because of the types of institutions in which blacks are most frequently enrolled. Characteristics like inadequate cultural/social growth may become more problematic to the extent that black students are enrolled in "desegregated," but uncommitted, institutions. Accordingly, many analysts of institutional behavior recommend that retention should have the direct attention of policy-makers in higher education desegregation. Sociologist Walter Allen advises:

> Researchers and policy-makers in the area of postsecondary desegregation processes must begin to pay more attention to institutional processes. For the structures, norms, practices and personnel of these

> schools may ultimately determine whether black student outcomes are positive or negative. To date white colleges in this nation have failed to consistently create the kinds of environments which would offer positive outcomes for black students. To be sure, some black students at these schools evidence high satisfaction, achievement and aspirations; but such outcomes are generally in spite of, rather than because of, actions by the colleges.[5]

A key indication of the difference that these sociopsychological factors can make comes from the example of traditionally black colleges. These institutions have much higher retention rates than other institutions with black students. This fact is particularly impressive when one considers that students at black institutions have much lower family incomes than students at most institutions. This fact might also serve as a guide for public education policy on persistence but, as yet, there is no significant policy.

6

Traditionally Black Institutions of Higher Education

Institutions of higher education, in which the majority of students are black, all emerged out of the larger American social structure in which higher education for blacks was at best tolerated in moderation. The control of most of these institutions was eventually taken over by blacks for the primary purpose of insuring educational opportunity for blacks and creating the necessary conditions for racial equality. These institutions are defined as "traditionally black" (TBI's). Other institutions were created or transformed at a time, usually near the second half of this century, when higher education for blacks had become a nationally recognized virtue for those who, on their own, could accomplish the herculean task of gaining access to college under conditions of persistent racism. These institutions are defined as "predominantly black" (PBI's). Clearly, TBI's are also predominantly black in composition, but they are distinguished from PBI's because the latter have no traditional commitment to serve a majority black student body. PBI's were rather propelled into service by non-black social forces. TBI's are products of external social forces, but they have developed into a singular creation of black Americans.

This chapter focuses on TBI's first because there are important differences in the educational experience they provide their students which grows out of the institutional traditions that traditionally white institutions (TWI's) do not have. Second, the higher educational attainment of today's black Americans cannot be understood without reference to TBI's. In fact, the vast majority of college educated blacks over the age of 30, owe their degrees to TBI's. Third, we cannot develop a public policy of equal educational opportunity for blacks without some model to guide us, and TBI's provide the only longstanding institutional model of commitment to that goal.

In the space available, we cannot describe the special functions of TBI's, but some of them, analyzed in other ISEP publications, should be mentioned. The functions, essential to equal educational opportunity for blacks, which TBI's have historically served and continue to serve more effectively than others, involve: (1) educating economically disadvantaged students; (2) educating black professionals; (3) retaining and graduating black students at all levels; (4) providing a sympathetic, sociopsychologically supportive environment for black students; and (5) setting standards for admissions which are as sensitive to the potential of black applicants as they are to the limitations of the students' pre-college backgrounds. Yet another function, or a summary of all the others, rests in the overall orientation of these institutions toward developing in their students a capacity to deal with racial and non-racial discrimination in the broader society.

Longitudinal Enrollment in TBI's

The enrollment patterns of TBI's cannot be understood in the same way as those of most institutions because their enrollments are not responsive to the same social forces. As parity in access between black and white students in other institutions has progressed, the proportional enrollment of blacks in TBI's has declined. While this may be good or bad, HEW guidelines, resulting from federal court rulings in the case of *Adams v. Califano,* have approached integration of public higher education as a necessary see-saw statistical relationship between black and white institutional enrollment. In reality, this is a deceptive relationship because students make choices based on how well their individual needs fit each type of institution.

In a period when enrollment was growing in most institutions, from 1968 to 1972, enrollment in TBI's was stagnant. Since 1976–77 when overall college enrollment was declining, enrollment in private TBI's was stable or growing, and enrollment in public TBI's is declining less rapidly. In 1977, total TBI enrollment amounted to 213,720 students, or just under 18 percent of all black higher education enrollment.

TABLE 6-1. Annual Percentage Changes in Total Enrollment for 102 Traditionally Black Institutions of Higher Education 1968–1977

Control	*Level*	*1968*	*1969*	*1970*	*1971*	*1972*	*1973*	*1974*	*1975*	*1976*	*1977*
Public											
	Four-Year	5.7	5.9	5.3	6.9	2.1	2.8	0.9	13.3	−0.6	−7.3
	Two-Year	−7.5	26.1	10.2	3.1	9.4	5.6	15.0	9.7	11.7	−6.0
	Total	5.4	6.4	5.4	6.8	2.4	2.9	1.3	13.2	−0.3	−7.2
Private											
	Four-Year	3.0	−0.2	0.7	3.4	0.6	−0.8	4.2	7.6	2.4	20.4
	Two-Year	4.0	−3.7	4.1	3.1	−6.1	−8.1	−1.7	−8.7	−0.1	−9.0
	Total	2.6	−0.4	0.9	3.4	0.2	−1.2	−3.9	7.0	2.4	18.8
Grand Total		4.5	4.3	4.1	5.8	1.8	1.8	2.0	11.5	0.4	−0.6

(1) Does not include graduate and professional schools.

Source: Institute for Services to Education, "Preliminary Fall 1976 Enrollment in Historically Black Colleges," *Research Profile* (5 February 1977).

This distribution of enrollment changes among types of institutions shows an important disjuncture between TBI's and TWI's. Enrollment in TWI's in the past few years has been growing faster in public institutions than in private ones, while the inverse is true among TBI's. Similarly, enrollment in two-year TBI's (always small), about 15,000 students in 1976–77, has been declining relative to four-year colleges, while among TWI's the two-year college share of enrollment has been gaining fast. Private black four-year colleges increased their enrollment by 19.9 percent in 1976–77, over the previous year, but other private four-year colleges had increases of only 3.7 percent. Public TBI enrollment, however, declined more substantially than most, as Table 6-1 shows.

These longitudinal patterns of enrollment support other data which indicate that four-year TBI's have a stable constituency which is not readily deterred by desegregation in white institutions. As discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, black students in white higher education institutions are disproportionately found in two-year colleges, in public institutions and in marginal programs at other institutions. It may well be, if TBI's are the examples, that black students have sought the more traditional mode of a private four-year college education all along. If that is so, then TBI's remain the only visible guarantee that black students will have the option they so frequently select.

The additional importance of TBI's, private and public, in setting an example of high persistence for black students is also best exhibited by the four-year institutions. With less than 18 percent of the total black enrollment in higher education in 1976–77, TBI's awarded 37 percent of all baccalaureate degrees received by blacks in that year.

Distribution in TBI's

Frequently, TBI's are held responsible for fostering an underrepresentation of black students in the sciences and other major-fields of study. The data on which such conclusions may be based are often accurate, but the analysis is usually naive or misleading. For example, TBI's have a higher concentration of Education majors than most institutions. This fact demonstrates the efficiency of TBI's in producing education majors. Yet, one cannot overlook the effects of external factors and societal limitations on TBI's, as well as the backgrounds of their students, which have resulted in the higher concentration of Education majors. The relevance of external factors is indicated by the fact that the Social Sciences, for one example, represent smaller proportions of the black enrollment in TBI's than in non-TBI's.

Still, the comparative unevenness of major-field distribution in TBI's should not be ignored. As Table 6-2 shows, almost 30 percent of students in TBI's are in Education as compared to 22 percent of black students enrolled in non-TBI's. The similar difference in ratios of concentration is also evident in business.

Primary among the societal factors impinging upon the TBI's capacity to encourage a more even distribution of its students by major-field is financial resources. TBI's have relatively small independent funds on which to draw. Their endowments are much smaller than those of most white institutions of comparable size, and their alumni are generally unable to provide much financial support. As a consequence, TBI's rely heavily on federal and state funds with some limited support from private foundations.

Colleges and universities generally depend on federal, state and local governments for about half their revenues. A larger, but unknown, amount of federal money goes to institutions indirectly through faculty research and consulting incomes. TBI's acquire 54 to 55 percent of their revenues from government. In contrast to most

TABLE 6-2. Major Field Distribution of Black Students in Traditionally Black and Traditionally Non-Black Four Year Colleges, 1974

	Institution	
Major Field	*Traditionally Black*	*Traditionally Non-Black*
Education	29.66	15.84
Business	20.39	16.26
Social Science	18.14	18.94
Natural Science	4.76	4.51
Technical Science	6.10	7.48
Professionals[a]	1.68	3.53
Social Work & Public Health	2.39	3.58
Architecture	.23	.60
Agriculture	1.17	.40
Computer Science	.56	1.03
Other[b]	14.93	27.84
Total (100% =)	(116,459)	(165,732)

[a] Professions refer to students who are in Nursing, Pharmacy, Pre-Law, Pre-Medicine and similar pre-professional programs offered at the undergraduate level.

[b] Other majors include: Foreign Languages, Home Economics, Library Science, and the precoded category designated in the survey as "others."

Source: Gail Thomas, "Equality of Representation of Race and Sex Groups in Higher Education," Center for Social Organization of Schools: Baltimore, Maryland, October 1978, Table 9, (Report No. 263).

institutions, 29 percent of TBI revenues come from the federal government. Among private institutions, the relative reliance of TBI's on federal financial support is even greater; 14 percent of all institutional revenues come from the federal government while 39 percent of TBI revenues are federal in origin. Private TBI's also depend more on student tuition and fees than most others, but these revenues are on the average five hundred dollars lower than at most institutions (ACT, 1978).

As a percentage of all federal funds going to institutions of higher education, federal funds for black institutions (TBI's and PBI's) have recently declined. The proportion for black institutions dropped 13 percent between 1974 and 1975 from 5.7 to 4.9 percent. However, black institutions only constitute about 5 percent of all institutions. Therefore, their special need for federal funds requires consideration of their special financial difficulties and educational commitments.

Returning briefly to the relationship between financial support and student distribution by major-field of study in TBI's, there is substantial evidence that funds for TBI's have historically been awarded with constraints attached—constraints on their distribution among fields of study. To fully understand the uneven major-field distribution of black students, one needs to reflect on the development of black institutions in the last century. Black institutions sought to respond to the most pressing occupational needs of blacks as a group. To a large extent, this response set the framework of institutional offerings and continues to influence the modern distribution of students in TBI's today. Just as much, professional employment opportunities influenced institutional and student choice. The current and past portions of major-field concentrations is a logical outgrowth of that background.

Changes are obviously needed, but some important influences on TBI's must change as well. A major factor influencing students at TBI's to distribute themselves differently can be federal funds. However, the distribution of federal funds by type of specialization seems to be as much constrained by historical practices as by institutional behavior. Federal funds for TBI's show a strong bias away from supporting the major-fields of study where financial support is most needed, particularly in the sciences. Of the 213 million dollars obligated to all black institutions, about 38 million dollars or less than 18 percent, were directed toward the "academic sciences" in 1975. Of the 201 million dollars obligated to TBI's, just slightly more than 18 percent was designated for "academic sciences" (see *Elusive Equality*).

Relationship of Federal Funds for TBI's and Non-TBI's

While the 201 million dollars for TBI's may appear large in the abstract by comparison with federal funds for other institutions, this amount is miniscule. Four predominantly white universities received more than 250 million dollars in R & D funds alone in the same year. By 1976, three white universities were getting slightly more in total federal R & D funds than all 105 TBI's (excluding Howard University) had received from the federal government for all purposes the year before. Moreover, these three institutions can be grouped with at least fifteen others which receive only slightly smaller amounts of federal R & D funds.

There is not necessarily anything unfair about the federal government financially supporting and rewarding those institutions which do research that the government sees as valuable, as long as all institutions have an equal opportunity to participate. Yet, there are few things more valuable in higher education than equal educational opportunity. By insuring educational opportunity to black students and others, TBI's have uniquely served this goal. If Administrative and Congressional spokesmen are to be believed, then this is also an important national goal. Institutions should therefore be supported on that basis.

In 1965, Congress recognized the legitimacy of responding to the special institutional needs of those institutions which provide special service to the national goal of equal educational opportunity. Thus, Title III of the Higher Education Act of 1965 authorized the allocation of funds to "developing institutions." Title III's expressed purpose is to support and strengthen institutions which serve large numbers of disadvantaged students. Many see in this language a pseudonym for black institutions. In any case, TBI's were obviously prime candidates for these grants.

It should be clear by now that one of the best ways for the federal and state governments to show support for equal educational opportunity is to aid institutions on the basis of their record of performance. Given the continued access and persistence that TBI's have provided black students, they should therefore, be substantial beneficiaries of such a policy. Where change is needed in TBI's as with student distribution, public financing can provide the initiative to set that change in motion. The many problems which TBI's now face, involving administration, physical plant, and enrollment, can all be traced to the nagging economic disadvantages which encumber them and their students.

TABLE 6-3. Title III: Awards by Type of Institution Fiscal Years 1976 and 1977*

	Grantees					*Total Funds*				
	Number		*Percent*		*Percent Change*	*Dollar Amounts*		*Percent*		*Percent Change*
Fiscal Years	*1976*	*1977*	*1976*	*1977*		*1976*	*1977*	*1976*	*1977*	
Total (All Grantee Institutions)	237	283	100	100	19.4	110,000,000	110,476,440	100	100	.004
Four-Year	153	187	64.6	66.1	22.2	83,600,000	83,940,000	76.0	76.0	.004
Two-Year	84	96	35.4	33.9	14.3	26,400,000	26,536,440	24.0	24.0	.005
Predominantly Black Institutions	68	82	28.7	29.0	20.5	54,580,000	48,270,700	49.6	43.7	—11.6
Four-Year	58	70	24.5	24.7	20.7	49,305,000	45,470,700	44.8	41.2	— 7.8
Two-Year	10	12	4.2	4.2	20.0	5,255,000	2,800,000	4.8	2.5	—46.7
Predominantly White Institutions	169	197	71.3	69.6	16.6	55,420,000	60,638,240	50.4	54.9	9.4
Four-Year	95	115	40.1	40.6	21.1	34,295,000	37,552,300	31.2	34.0	9.5
Two-Year	74	82	31.2	29.0	10.8	21,125,000	23,085,940	19.2	20.9	9.3

Fiscal Years	*Advanced Program (Dollar Amounts)* 1976	1977	*Basic Program (Dollar Amounts)* 1976	1977	*Average Grant Percent Change* Advanced Program	Basic Program
Totals (All Grantee Institutions)	1,705,882	623,656	256,157	276,192	—63.4	7.8
Four-Year	1,335,757	678,154	304,000	326,721	—49.2	7.5
Two-Year	1,265,454	497,143	170,958	185,536	—60.7	8.5
Predominantly Black Institutions	2,240,769	653,534	462,727	540,361	—70.8	16.8
Four-Year	2,330,000	706,272	503,723	601,842	—69.7	19.5
Two-Year	1,750,000	91,000	219,375	280,777	—94.8	28.0
Predominantly White Institutions	1,374,761	621,459	179,391	189,366	—54.8	5.6
Four-Year	1,537,500	663,300	190,903	202,261	—56.9	5.9
Two-Year	1,157,[illegible]	565,065	164,692	171,007	—51.2	3.8

* See also Appendix Tables A6-4 and A6-5.

** Does not include one four-year black private institution serving as consortium coordinator in 1976.

Source: Reanalysis of data from Advisory Council on Developing Institutions (DHEW). *Strengthening Developing Institutions, Title III of Higher Education Act of 1965,* Annual Report, (March 1977), p. 52 and (March 1978), pp. 39–40.

7

Issues in the 1980s for Black Americans in Higher Education

It is possible, though improbable, that sometime in the 1980's black Americans will gain "equal" access to higher education. Using current measures of parity, black Americans would then constitute 12.5 percent or more of all college students, and Hispanics along with native Americans would add another 7 percent or more. If that happens, and equal access to college becomes a reality, the major goals of federal and state higher education desegregation, as well as the primary purpose of much higher education policy, will have been satisfied. Equal educational opportunity for blacks, however, could and probably will remain an unfulfilled promise. In the late seventies, enrollment in American higher education moved from great disparity to within a few percentage points of parity for blacks. The social value of that progress can scarcely be questioned by anyone with an egalitarian approach to public policy. Yet, the agreed upon merit of equal access, and the need to pursue it, has perhaps overshadowed meaningful approaches to related inequalities affecting blacks in higher education. Issues of equality may, of course, be treated sequentially through overriding focus on a single or a few problems at a time. In higher education, however, the rather monolithic focus of research and public policy on access has had negative consequences. First, the belief that other kinds of inequality are also disappearing seems to be a popular misconception based in part on the progress made with this one factor. Second, the institutional and socioeconomic sources of inequality, which have largely escaped public focus, may well have moved, like water seeking its own level, to impede black opportunities at other levels.

It is clear that in spite of substantial gains in access, blacks continue to be disproportionately distributed among and within institutions by comparison to whites. Black students' rates of retention and graduation also remain low. Worse than should have been expected, black enrollments in graduate and professional schools have begun to stand still in some areas of study and decline in others.

Perhaps contrary to expectation, these conditions have not been positively affected by established federal desegregation. While federal aid to students has helped to reduce maldistribution among institutions, this benefit may be counterbalanced by a desegregation policy which does not look beyond the problem of simple college access. The frequent finding that black students are less likely to be retained and graduated in a traditionally white college than in a traditionally black one raises serious questions about the long-range effect of federal action. These questions center on the political issue and educational potential of federal involvement in higher education.

Federal Involvement in Higher Education and Equal Opportunity for Blacks

There are a great many federal and state programs which impact directly or indirectly on equality of opportunity in higher education but there is no comprehensive federal or state *policy* of equal opportunity in higher education.[1] The popular image of a federal policy of equal educational opportunity usually emanates from a selective focus on financial aid and/or desegregation. The image is realistic to the extent that the federal government is the primary promoter of equality of opportunity in higher education. It is, however, questionable to argue that the federal government has done more than promote expanded opportunities through the financial aid programs and reduce discrimination through its desegregation program. More important, a realistic appraisal of the federal role in higher education must recognize that it has been so limited that a great deal of higher education policy is made outside the federal purview. It is these outside actors, the educational institutions and state education authorities which continue to determine federal implementation and the meaning of federal initiatives. The degree to which a national interest in equal opportunity has or can permeate federal programs depends on how well these programs are structured to take into account the independent powers of states and institutions. The actual and intended interface of federal programs with private educational authorities and the structure of resulting equal opportunity programs constitute a relatively unsolved, but important problem, for the future of blacks in higher education.

Federal Aid to Students

Federal programs that provide students financial aid and loans, particularly those administered through the Office of Education under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 were, of course, inspired by Congressional concern with equal opportunity. The legislative spin-off produced financial aid funds which were singularly responsible for the 1970's growth in black student enrollment in college. For example, since the Basic Educational Opportunity Grants program (BEOG) was established in 1972, from 50 to 80 percent of all minority college students have come to depend on it to finance their education. At the same time, 25 to 30 percent of white college students depend on BEOG's. Because they are the vast majority in college, white students are still the majority of BEOG recipients. The program, thus, increases opportunities for all low-income students without regard to race and ethnicity. Moreover, the intention of the program is primarily related to the fact that college would be too costly for these students without federal aid. It is only partially guided by the actual costs of college attendance. The difference between equalization and current programs is exemplified by the half-cost limit of BEOG and Congressional opposition to full aid.[2]

As a consequence, the program does not alter the clear advantage that the wealthier majority of white students have. How could it be otherwise? Could the federal and/or state governments pay the full cost of higher education for the needy, under any selection criterion, without subjecting public funds to the private will of institutions? Or could alternative modes of direct voucher type aid be found? While financial aid program impact studies are numerous,[3] these questions, involving institutional relationships and financial aid, still need to be examined with regard to equalizing opportunity.

Federal Desegregation

College-educated Americans, born in the immediate aftermath of the U.S. Supreme Court's order in *Brown* to desegregate public education, have all attended college under conditions of pervasive racial inequality. Considerable research and public energy have been directed toward removing racial and ethnic inequality in higher education. Yet, the data suggest that those who attend college today and throughout the 1980s will experience many of the same inequities as their recent predecessors. And yet, the goals of desegregation in higher education as currently pursued, are unlikely to be responsive to many of these inequities.

Segregation, then, will not be the kind that the *Brown* case brought to the surface. It will, if current data are any indication, occur first within higher education among types of institutions and among types of programs. Most importantly, none of it will be readily adjudicable like *de jure* segregation but its effects may be as severe. It is such a possibility which demands our most intensive and original action and analysis.

By the beginning of the 1970s, the remnants of *de jure* segregation against minorities as individuals had virtually all been eliminated although the informal elements of segregation and the consequences of legal segregation remained. The federal court and HEW approach to the southern state dual systems of higher education, as a form of *de jure* segregation, has raised educational and political questions which make this problem look quite different. Whether or not dual systems are still a part of old-fashioned segregation can only be meaningfully determined by a much needed investigation of the costs and benefits to educational quality.

Beyond Brown: *Equity and Opportunity in the Courts*

As a result of *Brown*, desegregation became the centerpiece of federal efforts to promote equal educational opportunity for blacks. As equal opportunity policy, however, desegregation emphasizes "equality" and places "opportunity" second. Its emphasis on equality is further limited to the enforcement of racial balance in schools as a basis for assuring that black and white students have the same educational experience. Current desegregation authorities and supporters assume, with reason, that meaningful educational opportunities for blacks flow from the creation of racial balance in schools. The reasons for focusing almost exclusively on racial balance appear to flow logically from the Supreme Court's rejection of "separate but equal" as a viable principle. The logic, however, is only sound when opportunity is not at issue. This does not mean that "separate but equal" can be revalidated but only that the choice between it and racial balance is no longer central and no longer bilateral when opportunity is the issue.

The history of civil rights adjudication in higher education illustrates the logical problem. From 1938 to 1950, the NAACP and later the NAACP Legal Defense Fund won four suits which promoted greater access to higher education for blacks. The first two cases, *Gaines v. Canada* (1938)[4] and *Sipvel v. Oklahoma State Regents* (1948),[5] were won on the grounds that states had failed to provide any meaningful opportunities for blacks in law schools while these opportunities were available to whites. The subsequent cases, *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950)[6] and *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents* (1950),[7] were won on the grounds that facilities for blacks were unequal to those of whites and therefore blacks had to be admitted to graduate and law schools. These cases were fought primarily over the issue of equity. They provide, in the last two instances, for limited desegregation as a part of the provision of equity. The evidence presented in these cases showed that opportunities, and therefore equity, had been denied blacks through the separation of educational facilities.[8]

By contrast, in *Brown*, segregation was the primary issue as well as the focus of the judicial remedy while educational opportunity was only the societal mechanism through which the issue acquired its importance. Accordingly, the implementation of desegregation relieved the state of the obligation to measure educational opportunity and equity. Of course, the obligation of the state to provide for equity and opportunity, if not to measure it, is implicit in *Brown*, and it can be traced to the LDF cases from 1938 to 1950. Unfortunately, by following a precedent which minimized the measurement of opportunity, the desegregation process has practically ignored the problem. In this regard, Leonard Haynes argues that a consequence of recent black criticisms of the higher education desegregation process is the recognition that "equity for blacks in the process is a new idea."[9]

Technically, it is an old idea reborn through the federal government's turn toward higher education. The restrictive and privileged nature of higher education has always made questions related to opportunity paramount. Yet, because the level of publicly provided opportunity in elementary and secondary school appears to be an esoteric educational or pedagogical issue, the clear diversity of higher education revitalizes old, answered questions. Accordingly, the amicus brief in the *Adams* case of the National Association for Equal Opportunity (NAFEO) seems to be having a ground breaking effect which Haynes describes:

> NAFEO, in representing the consensus of the black community, is trying to break new ground in legal interpretation in segregation that puts the priorities on educational needs and outcomes as opposed to emphasizing racial balance. Judges have not heard representations of the kinds of issues articulated by NAFEO. All measures of success and failure have been related to racial distributions.[10]

Current racial inequalities are rarely race-specific (meaning here the targeting of blacks as a race). Yet, beyond simple access, the inequalities of the past generation continue, in varying magnitudes, to be as intractable as ever. After gaining admission to college, blacks are more likely to be confined to two-year colleges; they are likely to enjoy fewer options for specialization in any college; they are less likely to survive in college,[11] and they are more likely to end up in the least remunerative fields of study and in the least resourceful institutions. The federal government has taken steps, including the support of special programs at a few institutions, to reduce these inequalities in the 1970s, but success is no more likely in the 1980s than in the past unless the past desegregation approach is changed. The success of such steps depends on the identification of their educational significance and effects as well as on the political feasibility of reforming institutional structures. Research on both levels has scarcely begun.

Access: Continuing Questions

Progress toward equal access has, to the extent it resulted from desegregation and/or affirmative action, been made through the elimination of race-specific barriers to college admission. Progress toward equal opportunity in student distribution and persistence, as well as continued access in the 1980s will depend on the identification and elimination of barriers that appear racially neutral, but nonetheless have the effect of restricting opportunities for blacks. These barriers are probably more intractable than formal discrimination because they are largely the negative side-effects of the normal, if not professionally valued, attributes of American higher education. As such, public action waits on the careful analysis needed to demonstrate the weakness of the normal and "normalized" practices.

Higher education, like most sectors of American society, has undergone considerable strains and some transformation since the civil rights activism of the 1960s. Yet, it retains many of its traditional characteristics which historically served to exclude all but a privileged few. First, it is primarily private in character, if not in name, enjoying the protection that most quasi-free enterprise enjoys in relationship to public control. In this regard, the fact that public institutions enroll the majority of college students means only that higher education has begun to feel public pressure more directly. However, even public institutions are only quasi-public having substantially independent forms of administration. Second, higher education is traditionally selective, and its modes of selectivity have been historically insulated from public scrutiny.

More important, higher education institutions are frequently valued by legislators, the public and state education officials on the basis of their selectivity, rather than on the basis of their productivity of graduates. The growth of open admissions colleges since the 1960s and their preponderance among two-year colleges reduces, but does not transform, the implicit institutional commitment to selectivity and exclusivity. Moreover, hostile public and political reactions to open admissions, as exhibited at the City University of New York,[13] suggest a resurgent obsession with quality through exclusivity. How will such an attitude effect opportunity goals? Third, the more traditional institutions are themselves the primary creators of the limited public education policy by which they have been secondarily judged. Legislators and the courts have directly and indirectly tied the legitimacy and implementation of higher education policy to educators and researchers who are representative of traditionally powerful institutions and/or professional associations rather than representative of a diverse sample of the academically and non-academically concerned public. Ironically, the black and minority researchers have not had access to positions from which they could effectively answer the questions of how these institutional affiliations and networks may impact on equal opportunity policy. Regrettably, liberal interest groups have scarcely begun to raise these questions on the level of public policy.

Justice Powell's observation in the *Bakke* case that affirmative action procedures should not violate an institution's (normal and traditional) admissions procedure, unless there is an authoritative finding of past discrimination, is also evidence of a sweeping federal endorsement of institutional tradition—a tradition established when equal opportunity was little more than a vision. We, therefore, need to seriously consider the extent to which the liberal image of colleges and universities may be inconsistent with fundamental practice.

In addition, Justice Powell's opinion in *Bakke* raises other problems for policy analysis some of which are fairly new and some very old. Among the newer problems is Powell's question about the interdependence of medical service for minorities and affirmative action in medical schools. It is clear that professional schools and associations mediate the development of important public and private services. Graduate schools seem to function in a similar, but less oligopolistic manner. We need to make clear that these relationships require a special "public purpose" interest in minority education.

Finally, with regard to *Bakke*, the restriction of the U. C. Davis affirmative action program and the chilling effect of *Bakke* on other programs[14] suggest that gains in access for blacks may be very tenuous. When we consider that the level of minority enrollment in graduate and professional school is pitifully small—black enrollment is 6 percent in medical school, 4.5 percent in law school, and 3.6 percent graduate school—policy analysts should be actively interested in understanding why it has stopped growing. As we move into this new decade, we need to be concerned that the issue of equal access, which was beginning to disappear, may only be obscured by short-lived public pressures on an unchanging structure of selectivity. Nevertheless, there is still a lot of old territory to be covered in the areas of distribution and persistence.

Distribution: Continuing Questions

Political constraints aside, the primary limits on federal desegregation policy are, first, uncertainty about the depth of penetration of segregation in higher education, and second, inadequate legislative recognition that a social purpose like equal opportunity is consistent with the legitimate purpose and effectiveness of higher education. Concern with these limits guides the remaining discussion of policy issues.

More than half of all black doctorates at the time of the *Brown* decision had received their degree in education. Twenty-five years later, 55 percent of all blacks with doctorates received them in education. The consistency and lack of diversification are almost phenomenal, particularly in light of the fact that the majority of all blacks with Ph.D.'s got their degree since 1974. Among other things, higher education should be functional for employment opportunities. The heavy concentration of blacks in Education, and their corresponding underrepresentation in Engineering and the Physical Sciences may mean that compared to whites the educational system is economically dysfunctional for blacks. The employment question needs to be further examined from the standpoint of higher education regulation because maldistribution among minorities may mean that the growth of access has generated a new need to retailor the traditional social purposes of higher education to non-traditional students.

Considering that 25 percent of black undergraduates major in Education as compared to the majority of graduate students and 16 percent of white undergraduates, there is reason to believe that the tendency toward maldistribution occurs under the auspices of higher education. What happens inside college to produce this kind of de facto segregation? After dealing with the sources of inter-institutional maldistribution, such as between two-year colleges, one of the highest priorities should be to identify and eliminate the sources of maldistribtuion at the intra-institutional level.

On the inter-institutional or "systemic" level we know, for example, that the cost of schooling attracts blacks to public two-year colleges. But in terms of their expressed career goals, choice of majors and availability of funds, this explanation does not excuse black underrepresentation in four-year colleges. Similarly, open admissions attracts minorities but as David Lavin, *et al.* have argued, open admissions institutions have attracted more non-minorities.[15]

On the intra-institutional level, the largest questions remain. Blacks and Hispanics express in surveys[16] virtually the same career goals as whites and yet by their junior year their distribution across major fields looks quite different. While some of this may be determined by the special admissions of minorities, college faculty and administrators are not neutral bystanders. Faculty surveys give substantial evidence that faculty guide students into or out of major fields of study in ways that are ideologically partial and race-specific.[17] Moreover, black graduate students are much less likely than white graduate students to benefit from research and teaching assistantships which faculty administer and the public pays for. The selection patterns have reflected a racially non-neutral preference requiring further investigation. In addition, the long-range responsibility of federal funders as well as state and institutional authorities in overseeing the equitable distribution of their funds can have a clear impact on black student distribution among major fields. Faculty need to understand their important incentive role and, along with public authorities, they need to know how to compensate for the disadvantages of their customary "personal" preference behavior.

In this regard, the uniqueness and potential effect of black faculty still need to be studied. As an issue in itself, we already know why there has been virtually no increase in the proportion of minority, particularly black, faculty in the last decade.[18] The answer: there has been little private effort and less federal enforcement.

Finally, the uneven distribution of blacks among institutions affects the range of opportunities for specialization. While it may seem to be beyond the purview of desegregation, new HEW guidelines of public southern state systems, issued under the *Adams* rulings, make it an immediate issue. *Adams* involves traditionally black and white public institutions. But the basic question it raises also involves two-year and four-year colleges. Namely, to what extent may equal opportunity be assured if blacks are concentrated in different institutions from whites? Second, is a traditionally black college educationally different from colleges enrolling some or a majority of blacks? Mounting attacks on black institutions imply answers and yet the question has not been seriously posed at the policy level.

Persistence: Continuing Questions

When black students forego their initial intention for specialization, it involves both a problem of distribution and retention. High black drop-out rates seem to be preceded by the withdrawal of these students from preferred major fields. Social pressure and student-faculty relations just mentioned may be an important factor. The relatively high rates of black student retention/graduation at traditionally black institutions suggest that faculty attitudes and environmental-racial forces are significant.[19]

Correspondingly, the retention of black students in major-fields and in college may be seriously affected by *Adams* type desegregation of public institutions. That is, the federally instigated transfer of programs between traditionally black and white institutions may aggravate black attrition.

To the extent that institutions are not serious about equal opportunity in admission—and recent research suggests that they are not—black retention may be affected.[20] In particular, the long-run success of affirmative action programs depends on reducing the black student educational and social marginality in college. Special admissions programs may build-in high black attrition if segregation and negative labeling result. We need to understand how these programs operate in terms of institutional resources and commitment. At the same time, we need to push for a significant commitment of resources to programs that work. Perhaps, more important in explaining these programs, we need to recognize that the rewards available to their sponsors are at best minimal. What, if any, are the incentives to faculty and institutions for the successful promotion of equal opportunity? For example, numerous publications generally lead to tenure for faculty, and a staff of prominent researchers leads to large grants for institutions and faculty. What does serving the national interest of equalizing opportunity lead to? Rewards need to be built-in.

Questions in the Implementation of Equal Educational Opportunity

Looking at the unanswered questions of distribution and persistence raises more questions about access. As has been indicated, equal access once attained may not be stable. Public and institutional reactions in *Bakke* are but one example of an eroding American commitment.[21] What, if any, are the concrete safeguards against non-race specific, but socially/racially unequal barriers to selective admissions?

Since 1954, new threats to black access to college have emerged. The proliferation of standardized aptitude and achievement testing in admissions frequently poses one such threat.[22] It need not, however, if the process of admission were open to more equitable judgment and verification.[23] It is ironic that since *Brown,* seemingly non-race-specific criteria in admissions have shown the capacity to resegregate higher education, particularly at the graduate and professional level. We need to devise ways of opening the admissions process to public scrutiny and of making it accountable to legitimate social purposes. The basic issue of access to be resolved in the eighties involves the structure of higher education and its capacity to absorb equality of opportunity as one of its primary missions. In the seventies, access for blacks grew largely in conformity with increased access for all. In the eighties, we face overall retrenchment in enrollment and the size of institutions. Progress in numbers enrolled can easily be reversed unless there are structural supports for the new numbers. In the seventies, the support for black students came largely from outside the higher education system, particularly from federal financial support and civil rights related incentives. When the vigilance of the courts and legislators is gone, (and it seems to be going) what kind of federal backing will be needed? Without federal backing what might happen?

Traditionally, the status of any social group in higher education has been protected, or impaired, by other important social supports including family, wealth, "old boy" networks, and individual background advantages. These social factors have consciously and unconsciously been built into established patterns of selective college admissions. Blacks still do not have, as a group, the advantages which traditionally support higher education access. Unless there is renewed governmental support for black access, and/or unless institutions commit themselves on a long-term basis to the protection of equal access, the educational status of blacks will be precarious for a long time to come.

There are too many uncertainties and unresolved issues in higher education policy to permit continued ambiguity in the national approach to equal opportunity. Equality of educational opportunity for black Americans needs to be publicly defined as the assurance of racial parity in access, distribution and persistence. That assurance should be implemented through legislative and administrative action, judicial review and publicly supported institutional initiative. At the same time, federal and state support for students should be matched with incentives and rewards for institutions which demonstrate a clear commitment to educating blacks and other minorities.

Findings and Recommendations

Chapter 1

1. *Finding:*

In the past two decades the principle of promoting equal opportunity for black Americans in higher education has gained national recognition. Approaches to equal educational opportunity, however, have evolved through various legislative, administrative and judicial interpretations. As a consequence, federal and state programs for equal educational opportunity have not been comprehensively coordinated and evaluated.

Black Americans and other minorities have benefited enormously from a range of federal programs, particularly from federal financial aid to students. Judicially guided desegregation in higher education has also served to open doors. In recent years, however, the structures and implications of both these federal activities for black students have changed. Financial aid programs have expanded to include many more students. Federal desegregation has begun to focus on institutions which were never segregated. In addition, changing institutional diversity and costs, fluctuations in student enrollment and serious economic problems all come together to make a comprehensive definition and implementation of equal educational opportunity ever more important. Racial parity is the parameter against which success has generally been measured. Yet, the test of racial parity has not been applied with a consistent emphasis on protecting and expanding opportunities for blacks in all facets of higher education.

1. *Recommendation:*

The federal government should be committed to a comprehensive policy of equality of educational opportunity in higher education. Equal educational opportunity should be interpreted to require racial parity in access, distribution and persistence for students in all areas of higher education. Still, the pursuit of racial parity, should not be misconstrued to hamper the full development of colleges and universities which have traditionally served blacks and other Americans who are underrepresented in higher education.

Chapter 2

2. *Finding:*

The majority of black students in higher education today depend, in varying degrees, on federal financial aid to pay for college attendance. Federal aid to students, particularly Title IV programs, is essential to the promotion of equal educational opportunity. Yet, none of the programs counteract all the accumulated disadvantages which disproportionately impact on black students as a result of their economic status. Socioeconomic inequality between black and white Americans cannot be adequately assessed nor compensated for by simple calculations of cost and income ratios for students already in college. Racially unequal distribution inside and among colleges can be affected by family socioeconomic differences. Financial aid can be effective in reducing the resulting disparities in distribution and persistence among college students.

2. *Recommendation:*

More extensive financial aid packages for low income students should be developed. Financial aid programs should be carefully evaluated to determine ways of reducing racial inequalities in the distribution and persistence of students among and within institutions of higher education. The "half-cost" limit on BEOG awards should be raised for students who cannot afford to pay the remaining cost of college attendance.

3. *Finding:*

In addition to the financial disadvantages black students face, they frequently experience background and environmental disadvantages in pursuing higher education. Their secondary school training is more likely to be deficient. They often lack role models to guide their career choices. Once enrolled in college, they are more likely than white students to be enrolled in institutions which are least likely to lead to a baccalaureate degree and beyond. While these and other differences are associated with low income disadvantage, they cannot be fully countered through financial aid.

3. *Recommendation:*

Where possible, federal and state agencies should establish programs which encourage better articulation between secondary schools and colleges, and between two-year and four-year colleges. In line with better articulation, higher education should be structured to permit students as many educational career options as possible until they have been fully exposed to the choices normally available to students in four-year colleges and universities. Better counseling and better rapport with the feeder systems should be a part of the equal opportunity commitment of higher education institutions and programs.

Chapter 3

4. *Finding:*

In the years with which this report is primarily concerned, 1975–1977, progress toward racial parity in access for black undergraduates has continued. In 1977, blacks were 9.3 percent of all students in higher education and 10.2 percent of all undergraduates. Some observers have claimed that these proportions are sufficient for racial parity, but considering age group patterns in the larger population, a minimum of 12 percent black is necessary for racial parity.

Although moving in the right direction for undergraduates, progress has slowed down. With declines in total college enrollment, black gains in access in 1975–77 are much less impressive than in previous years. Considering that equal access says little about the kind of education one gets, equal access is a minimal part of equal educational opportunity.

4. *Recommendation:*

Because equal access is just a beginning to equal educational opportunity, the achievement of racial parity in access should be treated as a minimal obligation for all higher education. Above all, the federal Department of Education needs to make clear that the support of racial parity is a minimal requirement in federally supported higher education.

5. *Finding:*

The content of equal access is not just who gets into college but how they get in, who admits them and under what conditions. Many institutional and social factors contribute to equal access. Black institutions have, as a rule, always provided equal access. Other, predominantly white, public institutions have done so in recent years. The key to equal access for blacks is not simply the numbers of students enrolled but also the establishment of mechanisms for admissions to assure equal access.

There still are many impediments to access which have a heavier impact on blacks. Some, such as costs, may be uncontrollable. Others such as selective admission standards may be effectively improved to neutralize their racial impact.

5. *Recommendation:*

Public authorities at the federal and state levels should encourage, through their funding, those institutions and groups which have already contributed much to equal access.

The major barriers to admissions which have a disproportionate impact on blacks should be carefully surveyed. A disproportionate impact on black applicants should only be permitted where the educational use of such standards is clearly and explicitly justified.

6. *Finding:*

Black students, because their family incomes are generally lower than those of white students, rely on federal aid more than white students. Any change in the level of federal funding greatly affects their ability to pay for college. The recent expansion of BEOG and GSL eligibility could negatively impact on black enrollment.

6. *Recommendation:*

Before federal aid programs are restructured or reduced, impact studies should be carried out to assure that serious consequences for black students do not result from seemingly marginal economic changes.

Chapter 4

7. *Finding:*

By comparison with most student enrollment, black student enrollment is very unevenly distributed among institutions of higher education. Blacks are most underrepresented in the more traditional sector of higher education. The proportions of black students in private, four-year colleges and universities and in selective public universities are among the lowest. Black students are concentrated, about half of them, in two-year colleges. Yet, blacks choose to attend four-year colleges and universities at least as frequently as others.

With this concentration in two-year colleges are associated disadvantages in available funding, rates of retention, and kinds of educational options. Access to colleges and universities which have the greatest advantages has apparently been very limited for blacks.

In terms of equal educational opportunity, as long as blacks are unevenly distributed among institutions, the general gains in access may be more deceptive than meaningful.

7. *Recommendation:*

To the extent that two-year colleges carry the largest responsibility in terms of the enrollment of black and disadvantaged students, they should receive added public support. However, such support should be conditioned on the quality and productivity of the education provided.

Until two-year colleges can attain the levels of retention and education comparable to those of four-year colleges and universities, and until they can provide better access to these upper-division institutions, increasing black enrollment in upper-division institutions should be considered an equal opportunity obligation. Accordingly, state systems, and federal support of state systems, which guide students to enter two-year colleges should provide for equal access to four-year colleges, either directly or through effective "transfer" systems.

8. *Finding:*

Black students have, for a long time, been unevenly distributed across major fields of study. This uneven distribution has not changed significantly in recent years. Blacks are most heavily concentrated in Education, 25 percent of black undergraduates and 55 percent of black graduate students. They are most underrepresented in the physical sciences, on the average less than 3 percent. Generally, black students are most underrepresented in the most remunerative fields of employment. To this extent, the situation may be described as "maldistribution."

There are several reasons for this maldistribution. In part, it is caused by social and economic factors not amenable to education policy manipulation. In part, also it results from the different experiences of students in each major field in terms of faculty and institutional influences on the student.

The student's background academic preparation may also contribute to the differences in black and white student distribution across majors. However, background deficiencies only vaguely correspond to distribution deficiencies. Moreover, the expressed choices of entering students show that blacks prefer a different distribution.

Equal educational opportunity cannot be assured unless blacks are more equitably distributed across major fields of study.

8. *Recommendation:*

Institutions, as well as public education authorities, should make a sustained effort to encourage black enrollment in areas of very low representation such as the physical sciences.

Where specific factors in black underrepresentation can be identified, at every level of educational authority steps should be taken to correct impediments. Specialized remediation may be needed for students with specific educational background deficiencies. Faculty and departments should be supported in accordance with their contributions in this area. Federal concern for equal educational opportunity which has focused on the whole institution should also focus more narrowly. Data collection and evaluation must be critical of the educational units inside academic walls where real educational opportunities are made and, sometimes, unmade.

9. *Finding:*

Institutions of higher education differ widely in the resources and services they distribute. These differences characterize institutions which presumably exercise the same educational function. In addition, there are systems of stratification among both private and public institutions and those at the lower end have fewer resources. The distribution of federal Title IV funds and federal research funds reinforces this stratification. Black enrollment tends to be highest in the lower strata. Many barriers have developed to exclude blacks from the more selective public and private institutions. Selectivity, whether promoted by states or private institutional authorities, corresponds as much or more to differences in the wealth of students and the cost of the institution as it does to academic ability. Ability, as defined by states and institutions is, however, the primary criterion on which exclusion is justified.

9. *Recommendation:*

To the extent that institutional selectivity promotes black underrepresentation in higher education, it should not be publicly supported. However, institutional selectivity is traditional in this society and government should not seek to discourage it as long as it is academically and equitably structured. At the same time, institutional selectivity should not be financed by public funds unless it suits public purposes.

Equal educational opportunity should be one public purpose. Cost-sensitive Title IV funds, as well as R&D federal funds, should only be distributed with enrollment characteristics in mind. This does not mean that highly selective research institutions with low minority group enrollments should get less money. It does mean that any advantage they have in federal funding should be carefully recalculated weighing minority enrollments with other factors.

10. *Finding:*

While blacks are underrepresented in all areas of graduate and professional education, the distribution is very uneven. In addition to the decline in medical and law schools, enrollment of blacks in some schools has always been abysmally low. For example, only a little over one percent of engineering graduate students were black in 1976–77. Fortunately, engineering education associations have begun to show concern, and started developing programs to encourage black enrollment. Such associational concern, though frequently expressed, is often pursued with excessive reserve.

Recognizing the social role of graduate and professional education, some minimal standards for equal opportunity need to be set. In many cases professional associations and institutions have contributed their own minimal standard, and in other cases no recognized standards have been maintained.

10. *Recommendation:*

The responsibility and potential of professional educational associations and institutions should be weighed in the formulation and implementation of federal higher education programs. Where associations or institutions have the legal authority to determine who has access to higher education, the federal government should hold them accountable to minimal standards of equal educational opportunity.

Chapter 5

11. *Finding:*

Four black students for every three white students withdrew from college in 1975–77. Given the heavy concentration of black students in two-year colleges which have the highest attrition rate for all groups of students, the real black attrition rate may be still higher, but adequate data are not available to make a precise determination. In fact, there has been little sustained national effort to determine what happens to black students after they enter college and why they may not graduate. Consequently, blacks were only about six percent of the 1975–76 baccalaureate degree recipients and they constitute a much smaller proportion of advanced degree recipients. There is little reason to believe that the black student retention rate will improve without concerted action. It is not equal educational opportunity for blacks to be admitted to college unless reasonable preparations are made to educate and graduate them. A nation-wide analysis of persistence would benefit both black and white students.

11. *Recommendation:*

Persistence is one of the most important concerns in education generally as well as in equal educational opportunity. Yet there is no national policy and there are no substantial national programs which address problems of retention and attrition. The long-run solutions may be difficult to reach but it is fairly simple to begin. The public education agencies, particularly the Department of Education, should concern themselves directly with student persistence. Initially, this means that appropriate data should be collected from institutions. Next, persistence should be a recognized national and institutional responsibility involving equal educational opportunity.

12. *Finding:*

What little is known about racial differences in persistence demonstrates that some types of institutions, particularly traditionally black colleges, have higher retention rates. Others, especially two-year colleges, have low retention rates. In addition, retention varies significantly for black students according to their major field of study.

These variations seem to be a controllable part of the student's integration into the educational institution and department. Another directly effective mechanism which has impacted positively on black student retention is financial aid.

12. *Recommendation:*

In order to maintain a meaningful education policy involving persistence, the federal government can take a few corrective steps, although more data are still needed. First, it can tailor its institutional financing practices to reward those institutions which contribute to higher persistence. Second, it can regulate its student aid policies to reward student persistence.

Chapter 6

13. *Finding:*

Most of today's black college graduates owe their degree to a traditionally black institution. These institutions have, therefore, made an exceptional contribution to equal educational opportunity. Currently, they enroll just under 18 percent of black students in higher education. Recently, their enrollment size has fluctuated but less so than other institutions. Their enrollment therefore appears to be fairly stable. There is a continuing student demand for these institutions, in large part because they provide greater assurances than most that the student will not experience racial discrimination once admitted.

Congress has formally recognized the contributions of TBI's through the developing institutions act, but it has not backed up that recognition with a substantial financial commitment. Federal funds going to historically white institutions, directly and indirectly, have always been disproportionately larger. Historically, this inequity was blatant; now it persists almost unnoticed in the form of R&D grants.

In addition to current funding inequities, the cumulative effects of past inequities can still be felt by traditionally black institutions.

13. *Recommendation:*

Because TBI's continue to lead the nation in the provision of educational opportunity for blacks, these inequities should be addressed through federal funding. Public support should be tailored to evaluate these institutions in terms of their capacity to produce under conditions of equitable funding—conditions which have not yet been reached.

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